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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





SOME THOUGHTS
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CONCERNING
DOMESTIC SLAVERY,
IN A LETTER

To — —, Esq. OF BALTIMORE.

J. L. Lewis

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BALTIMORE:
JOSEPH N. LEWIS, 258 MARKET ST.

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1838.

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JOHN D. TOY, PRINTER.



SOME THOUGHTS
CONCERNING
DOMESTIC SLAVERY,
IN A LETTER

To ———, *Esq. of Baltimore.*

MY DEAR SIR :

CONCERNING the subject of domestic slavery, which has often formed matter of conversation between us, I have determined to write you my thoughts somewhat at length. For I have meditated much upon it since I saw you last; and now, that we can no longer meet at pleasure, as we were wont, to interchange discourse, my reflections have accumulated upon me to such a degree that no means of setting them forth would perhaps be so suitable as this: to say nothing of my own disposition, which inclines me rather to writing than to talking.

I have read Dr. Channing's book, which you were so kind as to send me. Shall I preface the

expressions of my disappointment by empty compliments to a skilful writer's abilities? Alas! there is little to commend in the greatest abilities if they appear to be employed in giving attractive forms to error. There are many noble maxims and well-expressed sentiments scattered throughout the book; if these were collected together and printed in the form of apothegms they would appear to good advantage; but now they seem like jewels adorning a dead man's head, giving decoration to that, which, seen in its nakedness, would be revolting to the sight.

This author, it appears to me, has fallen into the common error of those who give themselves up to the contemplation of abstract maxims, and take not into view the blended nature of our humanity, which being made of spirit and body is enabled to receive truths only in a corresponding manner; that is to say, not nakedly spiritual, such as abstract truths are, but truths embodied in the elements of things, circumstances, conditions. Concerning *Rights*, in particular, I have something to say; for upon this subject Dr. Channing has thrown together an unusual quantity of general principles, after the usual manner of those who delight in speculation. We talk of the *rights of man, of natural rights, of inalienable rights*. What do we mean? If an attempt is made to come down to particulars, and to specify what are these natu-

ral and inalienable rights, each in its turn eludes the grasp; some other general phrase is made in a loose way to sum up the gross. Or a more common method is to take a civilized man, and after considering the various rights which are indisputably his, other persons are then contrasted with him; and all are supposed to be suffering wrong who are deprived of any rights which he is acknowledged to possess. In this way it may happen that one's well-intended indignation against oppression, or what he deems such, shall be in proportion to his own elevation above others of his less fortunate fellows. In this view we need not wonder that Dr. Channing feels, as he writes, with much earnestness; for who doubts his great abilities?

But with regard to natural rights it appears to me that man is more poorly provided than the brutes. For the inferior animals have a natural right to food and drink, which are supplied ready at their need: whereas man, especially, in this climate, has a right to sustenance only on condition of labouring for it. The right to the common air is the only right, that I know of, which man possesses by nature; and this is his on such tenure, not only because respiration is so conjoined with animal life that the latter cannot exist without it, even for a few moments, but mainly because air for breathing is not the product of

human labour ; it is not subject to degrees of abundance and of scarcity ; it cannot be laid up for future use ; it is not subject to our control in the way of exercising industry, perseverance or foresight. Yet even this right, which is essential to the physical organization, is not I presume inalienable, for it may be forfeited along with life itself ; as we see does happen continually in states where criminals are put to death by the laws of the land, which were wilfully violated in full view of the penalty thereof.

Yet is not man herein the less favoured. If rights are not granted to him unconditionally as inherent and absolute, it is that he has the nobler prerogative of acquiring them for himself. If they are made to depend upon the proper exercise of his own powers it is because in such exercise consists his real glory : because thereby he attains to the excellence of his nature, to usefulness and true happiness.

The phrases, *rights of man*, *natural rights*, and the like, are therefore very ambiguous terms, which it is unsafe to bottom general reasonings on. For as rights are conditional, the proper measure of them is to be found in the character of the man. To the possession of every right is annexed the performance of a corresponding duty, as the tenure by which it is held. This performance ceasing, the right fails. It is not that cer-

tain rights are attached to certain duties by way of recompense, for the sake of which a man is called upon to perform the duties, but in the nature of things this connection exists. To perform duties is to do good, which implies moral power ; *moral power* then if you prefer it, may be called the parent of rights. I do not use this term in the general sense in which it is sometimes taken to denote mere mental superiority in distinction from physical force ; for it often happens that this kind of power is coupled with selfish purposes, and the respect which it exacts is tinged with servility. But the true idea of *moral power* is made up of intellectual ability blended with real goodness, which inspires confidence and love.

The human mind can be developed, not in its naked spirituality, but by being conjoined with certain elements of the natural and moral world in which we live. These afford substantial materials whereby its operations find subsistence and permanence. By its union with natural elements, gaining mastery over the same according to the established laws of nature, are produced the arts ; whether of ingenuity, of skill or of taste. By means of facts drawn from experience, by observation upon human life, by knowledge of men in their various modes of action, maxims of moral government are derived which take the form of laws or of philosophical truths. Whatever the

active spirit of man thus combines with itself becomes in some measure, a part of him, and he has right over it. But all such exercises of the human faculties (the same being developments of moral power as I have defined it) are made for purposes of good or usefulness, either general or individual, or more properly both. For both blend together in the harmony of good deeds. Such exercises are therefore called duties—hence the connection between duties and rights. There is nothing of exaction or of oppression in one man's possessing rights more extensive than those of another, for they are awarded to him almost instinctively. The principle upon which a person refrains from violating the estate of his neighbour is of a kindred nature with that which prompts one to pay respect to a good and great man, venerable by age and still more august by reason of a life of honourable services.

There is no prescribing limits to human rights. For they enlarge in proportion as new relations arise; and new relations arise in proportion to the development and exercise of moral power. How plainly may this be seen in the simple illustration which the lowest kind of labour affords! A man acquires a right to land, supposing the same to have been before common, by improving it; or rather by imparting to it all of value that it may possess, which being derived from himself, re-

mains still his own *peculium*. He whose industry and skill have thus appropriated a hundred acres, possesses rights a hundred fold greater than are his whose indolence reposes lazily upon one. Throughout the whole range of man's relations, individual, social or civil, where knowledge is employed for purposes of good, rights of consequence arise which are universally revered by the spontaneous acknowledgment of all hearts that are human. Let it be remembered that the existence of rights does not depend upon the existence of a tribunal to pronounce them such ; nor upon the possession of force which is sometimes necessary to make them respected. For tribunals themselves, and the force which executes their decrees derive all their legitimate authority from rights that existed before. They are the consequences not the causes of rights, and are rendered necessary in the world by reason of the evil that yet abounds among men, which if left to work its purposes would swallow up all rights.

A man of enlightened mind who has acquired self-control by means of knowledge and virtue ; who has come to know the laws of nature and the principles of the moral world ; who has received sublime truths in his understanding which his life has embodied in noble actions for the good of the human race ; a man of this character, bearing the image of God in the aspect of ennobled humanity ;

let him be placed side by side with a savage New Zealander newly gorged with a meal of human flesh, which with bloody fingers he has devoured half raw, while the impress of the brute blends with the image of the fiend in every lineament of his face—tell me, my dear sir, is it possible that those two men can occupy equal spaces and possess equal rights (for occupancy is here the measure of rights) in the world of human action and responsibility?

A man's claim to rights is just and proper according as he holds and exercises the power of performing the correspondent duties. Rights then are various. To talk of equality of rights is absurd; to talk of inalienable rights seems not much better. For if rights are not inherent and absolute, they are not inalienable; if they may be acquired, so also may they be lost. Does not the constant practice of men show this, when they put culprits in prison, condemn them to labour or stripes, and even hang them by the neck?

It may be asserted as a general truth, that all men have a right to political freedom. But may we not suppose a people, and that too, without going beyond the record of facts, or travelling far back into time, who by their ignorance and vices have shown themselves unfit for the possession of this right. Unfit, because they knew not the duties which such right of necessity imposes; or if they knew, were incapable of performing them.

Such people have found in the government of a monarch that peace and security which they were unable to procure for themselves. Nor should we be disposed, I apprehend, to laud that spirit of mis-named philanthropy, which would busy itself in exciting a nation of this kind to revolt, under the plea, that the people possessed a natural right to a free constitution. For there is abundant evidence to show that the consequences of revolution would be, to plunge them into scenes of continual violence and bloodshed, insomuch, that the arms of the sternest despotism would be to them a desirable refuge. Such people are not made slaves by the usurpation of a king; they had made themselves slaves before; and happy will they be, if now they may exchange the capricious domination of their own passions for the steady rule of another's well ordered mind. Tyranny is the abuse of this power of rule.

Let us now consider the doctrine of rights in relation to slavery. Personal freedom is doubtless a right which every man ought to possess; because no man ought to render himself incapable of using it properly. I would not reason with a man who should insist that slavery was not an evil as a permanent part of social and political institutions; nor with any one, who would maintain that it was not a wrong, in the general view of man's capacities, and of the excellence which

he is called to attain. One who has known what it is to be free, need go no farther than his own instinctive feelings to be assured that slavery is a wrong—a wrong in the general view mentioned above, and still more a wrong in proportion to the capacity which the enslaved possess of understanding and of appreciating freedom. Those who are acquainted with no other condition than that of servitude, having been born to it; who are satisfied with their situation and desire no other, being fit for no other; such persons are not conscious of injury, and indeed suffer none, that I can see, except in so far as the power of the master is used in an arbitrary and tyrannical manner, for purposes of cruelty or of mere gain, and with no view of elevating the nature of the slave, in order that he may, after a time, emerge with safety into a condition more befitting a rational creature.

If political slavery be the only suitable condition for some people, it appears to be but following out the analogy, to suppose that personal servitude is the most proper condition for others, who are still farther sunk in imbecility. It is indeed, in many countries the natural consequence of political slavery, when the rule of the monarch becomes tyrannical. ‘In Achim,’ says Montesquieu, ‘every one is for selling himself. Some of the chief lords have not less than a thousand

slaves, all principal merchants, who have a great number of slaves themselves, and these also, are not without their slaves. Their masters are their heirs and put them into trade. In those states,' continues this author, 'the freemen being overpowered by the government, have no better resource, than making themselves slaves to the tyrants in office.' 'According to Mr. Perry,' says this same writer, 'the Muscovites sell themselves very readily. The reason for it is evident; their liberty is not worth keeping.'*

A man must obey some master. If that master be within him, ruling by a sense of duty and the law of reason, obedience will conduct him to the highest state of human excellence and felicity. But if he have not this guide within himself, he will still serve; but he will serve capricious tyrants. For he will be enslaved by his own sensual and selfish passions, than which no tyranny is more intolerable. It is a good maxim which was uttered by Mr. Coleridge, that external control should be in an inverse ratio to the power of inward control. It may be the means of saving a people from self-destruction, to put them under service to some more steady will than their own. Do you ask is slavery then right? How vague the question! In view of what man ought to be who shall pretend to say that it is right? Nay,

*Spirit of Laws, book xv. ch. 6.

who does not see that it is utterly inconsistent, if continued permanently, with the full development of the nobler feelings and faculties? Or in view of the uses to which the enslaved are often put; such as of traffic, making merchandise of them; or of cruel labour, making mere machines of them to minister to cupidity—who can undertake to justify these things? But the question of right must be applied in reference to the state of those who are captives, and also to the character of those who are masters. It is only by reason of the conditions of the case that the relation becomes proper. Who finds fault with a child because it is not a man? Or who expects from a child the self-government of a man? How tyrannical would be the restraints which are imposed upon minors, if they were put upon grown men! Yet who complains of them when applied to children? Nay, children themselves seek for them in willingly placing themselves under the control of those whose superior wisdom they venerate. Acknowledging the control of parents over their children to be right, no one will yet undertake to justify all abuses of such rule. Parental cruelty can find no excuse therein.

In all communities of men the principle of subordination prevails. Ignorance does homage to wisdom; moral weakness seeks to put itself under the guidance of some power which it finds

not within. Abuses of this principle also prevail; such as when prescriptive dogmas take the place of wisdom, and extort submission with bigoted intolerance; and also when force, whether derived from riches, from office, or from any other source apart from real worth, strives to compel others into its train. But these abuses, so far from disproving the principle, are indeed, evidences of its existence; and draw their power from the principle which they pervert. The same rule of subordination, when it acts in reference to two classes, wherein civilization and barbarism are at the extremes, takes the relation of personal servitude on the one hand, and of personal control on the other. For the reverence which the inferior naturally pays to those above him, here becomes servility; having little of self-respect to ennoble it.

There are then several considerations to be taken into the account, when we would pronounce concerning slavery in a particular instance. For example, with regard to the enslaved—were they free and civilized before? Were they capable of self-government? Then they suffer great injury. Again, of the masters—have they used violence in subjecting their fellow-men to bondage, for purposes of gain or of pleasure? Do they use their power with cruelty? Then they do great wrong. But in this as in all other matters of opinion, we shall run into great absurdities, if we

contemplate a mere abstract question, without regard to conditions and particulars. For although slavery from its great liability to abuse, may be the source of the greatest evils that can befall mankind, yet it is very certain, that in itself it may be a perfectly natural and voluntary relation, which shall subsist to the mutual advantage of both parties. I can very well imagine how Providence may design a blessing to a degraded people by placing them in bondage among a civilized community; not indeed with a view to perpetuity; but as a means of receiving the elements of useful knowledge and of morals. For they could not well receive such elements in any other way. Is the course of discipline a severe one? How shall a nation or an individual attain to wisdom and virtue without severe schooling? And let it be remembered, that the rigour of the process and the duration of it, are in proportion to the degree of abjectness from which the resurgation begins.

So far from slavery being in itself, always, the violation of all rights and the consummation of all wrongs, I cannot conceive how a savage people could dwell in a civilized community, (if by any means they are brought thither,) in any other relation. And knowing that they could maintain no other, they would not desire any other, if good will and kindness prevailed among the civilized race in proportion to their superior knowledge.

In such case the power of the master would not be exercised with cruelty; nor would the servitude be continued longer than the condition of the subject required it; provided the relation could be changed without danger to either party. What more natural? An ignorant barbarian, thrown by any means into the society of a civilized man, would instantaneously regard him as a superior; he would reverence him, he would obey him, he would delight to serve him. For he would perceive how far his enlightened companion surpassed him in the knowledge of things, in arts and useful contrivances. His own consciousness of ignorance, while it brought humility, would be accompanied also by a desire to learn. He would be willing to give whatever he had in exchange for the favour and the instruction of such a superior. And what would he have to give but personal service? How could the other impart knowledge or deal with him at all, except upon condition of obedience? It is useless to controvert about names; but there is no denying that the relation of master and slave would here subsist as the most natural and proper that could be. De Foe, who is so noted for his fidelity to nature, has represented the savage, Friday, prostrating himself before the solitary monarch of the island, and by putting the foot of his master upon his own neck, indicating more strongly than words could have

done, that he was his slave to obey him in all things. It is to be understood in all cases of this kind, that the savage has not been for any long time under the teaching of misguided philanthropists; otherwise his head being filled with abstract doctrines of the rights of man and of the equality of the species, he might be disposed to regard his superior as a tyrant or a man-stealer, and therefore become sullen, envious, and revengeful.

In this view of the subject there is no difficulty in understanding the words of Paul, 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your hearts, as unto Christ.' 'And ye, masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.' Ephes. vi. 5, 9.

The evils of slavery are to be found in the abuse of the ruling power; just as a monarchical government by admitting a tyrannical prince, may become the source of much misery. It affords occasion for the exercise of injustice; for the growth of selfish passions, which may soon weaken the hold of better feelings upon the heart, and may tempt us to seek to make a state of things perpetual, which ought to endure only for a time. The situation of a master, so far from seeming a thing to be coveted, does indeed bring with it

relations of fearful responsibility. For he ought to look upon himself somewhat as a guardian to those whom Providence has placed under his charge. But when this responsibility comes in the course of things, as by inheritance in a community where slavery exists, it is in my judgment, no mark of magnanimity for a man to cast off the connection that binds him to his slaves; and under pretence of giving them freedom, to leave them without a guide or protector in the midst of a society where they can possess no rights; where they have few inducements to good conduct; where they are surrounded by a thousand incentives to indolence and vice. The matter becomes very different, of course, when the master may give them freedom, and at the same time place them in such a situation as that their freedom shall indeed be to them a blessing. Then the act becomes noble.

Let us now come to the particular matter in hand, concerning the African race who are held in bondage among us. Were they a free civilized people dwelling in harmony under the government of wise laws, from which condition of independence and happiness they have been torn by violence, and condemned to unaccustomed toil and degradation in a strange land? It is proper that we should know something of these particulars. This much is certain, that the ancestors of

these negroes were, as the natives of Western Africa are now, a barbarous, savage people ; sunk in superstition ; and given to all manner of rude, cruel and low customs. I presume it would be difficult to find upon the face of the earth, a race of people more abjectly sunk in human imbecility. Among the African tribes as among all savage people, wars have been common ; the natural state of savages may almost be said to be a state of war. In these wars the invariable custom has been, and still is, to make slaves of those who are taken captives. If however, a tribe has slaves enough, and finds no means of disposing of a fresh accession of prisoners, the custom is to put them to death. I have it from a gentleman who was for some time colonial agent in Liberia, that a chief of a tribe in the interior to whom he had sent commissioners for some purpose or other, having taken a number of prisoners whom he had no use for as slaves, stabbed them with his own hand in presence of the commissioners. When a chief or head man dies it is usual to kill many slaves at his funeral, in order that he may not want attendants in the other world. The number of victims is generally in proportion to the dignity of the chief. When a market was opened by slave-dealers, wherein these captives could be disposed of at a profit, the custom of putting them to death was no longer followed ; for by such act.

the captors would be depriving themselves of ready gain.

Slavery has existed in Africa, as a part of their social institutions, for so long a time that no one can point out the period when it began. In 1796, when Mungo Park visited the western coast, he found in the Gambia country that the free class of inhabitants composed only one-fourth of the population: 'the other three-fourths,' says this traveller, 'are in a state of hopeless and hereditary slavery. Among some tribes, as the Mandingo, there is some protection of law to the domestic slave; that is to say, the master cannot put him to death or sell him to a stranger without calling a palaver on his conduct.' How far this may shield the slave from the cupidity or cruelty of the master I know not. 'But this degree of protection,' says the traveller, 'is extended only to the native or domestic slave; captives taken in war, those unfortunate victims who are condemned to slavery for crimes, or insolvency, and in short, all those unhappy people who are brought down from the interior countries for sale, have no security whatever, but may be treated and disposed of in all respects as the owner thinks proper.'*

It will thus be seen that the injury inflicted upon the negroes by carrying them to a distant country for purposes of labour was indeed no

* Park's Travels, ch. ii.

injury at all. For they were thus delivered from a worse bondage at home ; or from death itself. I say from a worse bondage at home—for what condition can be worse than a state of servitude to a barbarous savage, who possesses the power of inflicting tortures and death in any moment of caprice or passion ?

I have not set forth this view of the subject for the purpose of justifying the traffic in slaves which has so long been the disgrace of christendom ; nor in any manner to excuse slave-traders who are certainly impelled by no humane motives in carrying on their business ; but by motives entirely selfish and abominable. It is proper however that we should be acquainted with all the particulars which affect the general question ; otherwise how shall we be able to form a rational opinion ? In the consideration of this part of the subject we may also find an antidote against that hasty sort of philanthropy, which, viewing things only according to outward appearance, is inflamed into a zeal without knowledge ; which leads many to deplore the condition of a people who are certainly the gainers by their captivity ; who enjoy in their present state more comforts than their ancestors ever conceived of ; who are in a situation whereby they may gain a knowledge of many useful arts, and receive in some degree, the elements of true religious faith. They have been

delivered from a state of life, the lowest that human nature has ever sunk into ; a condition of society where cruelty, treachery, revenge, debasing superstitions, and all manner of abominable uncleanness composed the elements of education. With all the evils that belong to their present mode of living in this country, there is no question but it is far superior to that of their countrymen in Africa, who are the slaves either of one another ; or what is equally bad, the slaves of their own vices and superstitions.

It is natural for persons of quick sensibilities, when their minds are awakened to a perception of wrongs in which they have been concerned, whether innocently or not, it is natural I say for such to feel a strong desire to make immediate compensation ; under the influence of which feeling, they are often hurried into hasty and inconsiderate actions which frequently bring great evils upon themselves, with but little good to the objects of their solicitude. Such a feeling is akin to that which prompted pious ascetics of old, to lacerate their bodies, and to endure many distressing penances, to atone for sins, which their imaginations, under the excitement of sudden remorse, had conjured into horrible forms. A state of mind like this is certainly ill adapted for purposes of real and useful benevolence ; yet such, I apprehend is the feeling

among many who are advocates of the immediate abolition of slavery in this country.

What then? Because in the order of Providence a state of servitude may become the means of ultimate good to the enslaved, and in certain contingencies such condition may be natural and proper; because the negroes whom we hold in bondage have not suffered those injuries which many at first view are apt to suppose, but are in reality the better for their captivity, does it follow from all this that we are to remain at ease and do nothing for their deliverance? Nay, rather on the other hand we ought to see that the final issue for good depends upon our action to this very end. To keep them in servitude perpetually is to defeat the real purpose for which such servitude may be to them a blessing. If no injury has hitherto been done them, we begin a course of injury by neglecting to seek some rational means of restoring them to wholesome freedom in such manner, as that the change may be effected gradually and with safety to both master and slave. They may not be conscious of having suffered wrong; they may not now feel that any rights are withheld; but does that remove from us the obligation to do justice? If by accidental means I come into possession of another's property, which he does not know to be his own, yet for the want of which he may be suffering, can I lawfully retain possession

of it? Yet if this person be a minor, to whom I am guardian, he being incapable of making a proper use of his inheritance, it is hardly my duty in view of clearing conscience, to entrust him with that, which, though lawfully his own whenever he shall be in a fit condition to use it, may at present become the means of his ruin; which will cause him to be exposed to a thousand dangers, not only from the dishonesty of knaves, but also by reason of his own ignorance and want of experience. In the proper blending of these two duties, viz: that of restoring and that of withholding will be found occasion for the exercise of genuine benevolence, tempered with discretion, which is the wholesome condition of both; for neither should act alone.

It may be asked how shall it be known when the state of servitude becomes no longer proper, if there be conditions which make it so at all; as I have supposed there are. To this the answer seems to be; when the evils of the relation become apparent. It is in this way that we are taught to change any course of conduct which we had been in the habit of pursuing with seeming safety before. The perception of these evils makes it evident that something is wrong; it then becomes the part of conscience, enlightened by reason, to discover wherein is the error; and to suggest and to provide the means of its removal. But it

belongs to those only, who are concerned—that is to the community wherein slavery exists, to choose the time of action as well as the mode. It is their own business, in which no other has a right to interfere. For as the responsibility rests upon them; as the consequences of their doings must be theirs, it would be impertinent and wicked to intrude upon the limits of their moral freedom. Whatever advices are offered from abroad, should seek admittance only through the medium of a spirit of sympathy, made up of kindred feelings and of sincere good-will; they should claim influence only, as they are received with willingness; and none are the legitimate judges of their applicability, save those whose duty it is to act.

The substance of what I have been discoursing about may be briefly set forth thus:

First concerning Rights: That they are not inherent and absolute; otherwise the rights of a man and of a child would be the same; but they are relative and depend upon duties. In proportion as a man improves his powers for purposes of good in their legitimate order, in such proportion do his rights increase. These rights follow of necessity as natural consequences; although it may often happen that the brutal part of human nature, operating by force, may overpower the inward voice of right. From this it follows that if rights may be acquired by virtuous labour, so also

may they be lost by indolence and vice. When a man becomes incapable of using a right, it is in reality no longer his. A man of full growth and sound constitution has a right to marry; a child has no such right; nor will the man continue to possess it, if he pursues evil courses to the enervating of his body. An intelligent man of good moral principles has a right to freedom of action; a madman has no such right; nor the confirmed desperado, who has shown himself incapable of respecting law. A nation of virtuous and enlightened people have a right to a free constitution; an ignorant or a corrupt people have not. These latter, unable to govern themselves, require the strong rule of a single man. Under a republican form they would be employed in cutting each other's throats.

The power of using a right worthily is blended with an instinct that prompts to its exercise.

The consciousness of wanting the power of using a right properly causes one to know that he has no just claim to it. A servile people do not desire freedom.

These two remarks however are to be taken with limitations. The sense of inward power pervading a vast multitude is often in its conception indistinct; it excites enthusiasm which drives to excess. Time and experience are required before men can know themselves. Again, a cor-

rupt people often cleave to a republican form of government and preserve the outward appearances of being their own rulers ; but it is only until they are fully convinced of their incapacity. Roman self-government was no more, after the domination of Sylla ; the form of the republic remained for some time later ; nay the consular office was continued, and also the shadow of a senate for many years under the emperors.

Secondly concerning slavery : Is political slavery right, such for example as that of the Turks ? Who shall say that it is right, in view of the capacities and duties of man ? Is it wrong ? Who shall say that it is wrong, in view of the character of the people who could perhaps live under no other kind of government ! If it is wished to change outward relations, you must first change the inward disposition ; to improve a form of government you must first improve the character of the people.

Is personal slavery right ? What, as a part of national institutions intended for permanence ? Certainly not. Has one man a right of property over another ? What, as an article of merchandise, to be bought and sold merely ? By no means.

Slavery becomes proper only by reason of conditions. A people ignorant and docile ; uncivilized, yet accustomed to labour, dwelling in a community of enlightened men, from whom they

are distinct in race, cannot well hold any other relation than that of servitude. Shall the superior class degrade themselves for the purpose of more easy association? This relation becomes still more necessary, when the inferior race has been for innumerable generations inured to slavery, inso-much that a servile spirit is their chief characteristic. But this relation being, under such conditions, proper, there is no justification afforded thereby to the imposition of unusual labour; to cruelty, or to capricious tyranny of any kind; nor to the indulgence of selfish cupidity. For the laws of reason and of right are ever binding; nor is there any condition of things which may release a man from the christian obligation of doing as he would be done unto.

CHAPTER II.

I PROCEED now to consider the modes which have been recommended of delivering the country from the evils of slavery. The first which I shall allude to is that which is urged with much warmth by many persons at the north, who are known by the name of *Abolitionists*.

The chief purposes of the Abolition society are stated in two propositions. I quote from Jay's Inquiry, which is orthodox, I believe, with the friends of this measure.

1. 'The immediate abolition of slavery throughout the United States.'

2. 'The ultimate elevation of the black population to an equality with the white in civil and religious privileges.'*

I shall not now stop to consider by what means the advocates of this scheme propose to accomplish their purposes. Let us suppose them to be effect-

* Jay's Inquiry, p. 141.

ed ; and let us consider what might be expected from such a consummation in some one of the cotton-growing states of the south, where the whites and blacks are nearly equal in numerical proportion. Let it be remembered also that amalgamation by intermarriages is allowed on all sides to be a thing wholly impracticable ; for we have the assurance of Mr. Jay that the abolitionists are the advocates of no such odious measure. ‘One of the designs,’ says this writer, ‘falsely imputed to them (the abolitionists) is that of bringing about an amalgamation of colours by intermarriages. In vain have they again and again denied any such design ; in vain have their writings been searched for any recommendation of such amalgamation.’*

Here then we have dwelling in the same community two distinct races of men, totally different, the one from the other, in colour, in modes of life, in modes of thinking and of feeling : and the one far superior to the other in knowledge, in art, in refinement, in property, in every thing that pertains to civilization. It is expected of these two different sorts of people, that they will unite together harmoniously in administering the public affairs ; that they will compose parts of the same body politic ; in a word that they will dwell together as one people.

* Jay’s Inquiry, p. 147.

I leave all other parts of the subject, my dear sir, to come in as they may, with a view of setting forth singly and with clearness, this proposition, viz. *That two distinct races of people, nearly equal in numbers, and unlike in colour, manners, habits, feelings and state of civilization, to such a degree that amalgamation is impossible, cannot dwell together in the same community, unless the one be in subjection to the other.*

I care not to inquire by what process the friends of immediate emancipation propose to have the coloured population brought into a full possession of civil privileges; whether immediate or gradual. The consummation in either case is the same. The means by which they are attempting to gain their end will also be passed by, for the present. The impolicy and dangerous tendency of their measures will be most clearly seen by considering the issue to which they must come.

In every state which acknowledges one constitution there must be a certain common interest whereby it is bound together: from which will follow a harmony of parts, and a common feeling of sympathy. This is necessary to give unity to a state, and to constitute it individual.

From these considerations come two principles, which are equally evident and necessary. *First*, with regard to the sovereign will of the state which expresses itself in the form of laws, it is plain that

this must be *one*. It may have for its agent an elective officer whose duties are defined, and blended with those of other agents, or a king, or a senate, or any other depository. It may itself be called the soul of the state, whereof the body may have one form or another. It is essential to this supreme will or power, that it be *one*. If there be a rival power in the nation which is not subordinate, then there can be no harmony until the question of supremacy is settled. Hence the early history of England, not to mention other nations of Europe, is filled with details of the many strifes between the throne and the church. For it was contended by the clergy that they were not amenable to the civil laws of the nation ; they claimed not only to be exclusively under ecclesiastical jurisdiction themselves, but also maintained the supremacy of the pope in all matters both secular and spiritual. This contest was the fruitful source of dissensions until the question was finally determined.

The governing power must not only be supreme, every other power being subordinate, but there can be no security unless it has also *a sense of permanence*. Thus, when Ferdinand of Spain subdued the Moors, yet was not the nation at ease, until the whole body of the Moorish people were exiled from the Spanish soil. For although this race were in a state of temporary subjection,

yet remaining distinct with all their national peculiarities, which were in every respect foreign from the genius of the Spanish people, there could exist between them no confidence or sympathy. Perpetual care and vigilance would be required to watch them; every disturbance in the state might afford them an opportunity of rising in rebellion; and in a word, neither peace nor security could be enjoyed so long as they remained in the kingdom. Hence the necessity of a measure which may at first sight appear cruel.

The same principle is manifested sometimes in the histories of separate states, as in the case of Rome and Carthage. Both powerful, and animated by feelings of mutual hostility, for being so totally different in character and pursuits, there could be little cordiality between them, the one was continually in dread of the other, and feared to undertake any great business which might require all the energies of the state, lest the occasion would be seized upon by their enemy for commencing hostilities. In this view the saying of Cato, *Delenda est Carthago*, may contain some sound policy, as well as much of the barbarous spirit of the age.

Secondly,—There must be in every well-constituted state a certain homogeneousness of parts. Not only is it necessary that the governing power be supreme, and free from any dread of subver-

sion ; but the several members also of the body politic must be in harmony, both among themselves and with the governing power likewise. According as the constitution of a country is fixed, the various subordinate departments of all grades, each after its kind, may be considered as the recipients and dispensers of the supreme will, even as the various limbs and organs of the body are recipients and dispensers of the life of a man. Or as the sap of a tree rises from the roots, and ascending to the top, is returned again downwards, diffusing itself throughout the various vessels and tubes, imparting nourishment to every branch and spray ; so the *vis vitæ* of the state performs a like course, whereby one common spirit pervades the entire community. But this healthful circulation cannot go on if it so happen that some members are unfit recipients of this influence ; obstructions take place, and a general derangement follows through the whole system. Or, to take another illustration from nature. It is well known that crystalization, whereby many particles are joined together to form one body, can be effected only when the elements are homogeneous.

The idea of force is repugnant to that of a well-ordered state. I speak not of that kind of force which is sometimes necessary to repel foreign aggression, and which ought therefore to be well provided for. But in the internal administration of its own affairs obedience is expected to follow

implicitly the dictates of the governing will, when the same is expressed in the form of law. If this power, in its diffusion throughout the divers ramifications of the political system meets with obstructions, force then arises to remove the impediment. This being done force subsides. It is manifest therefore that all the parts of the body politic must be in harmony. The elements of this are found in many things: such as a common language, common interests, geographical situation, with facility of mutual intercourse, intermarriages, with their corresponding relationships; to which may be added a common religion and identity of blood. It may indeed happen that a foreign people may be incorporated with a community already established, as will be noticed more fully hereafter; just as a strange shoot may be engrafted upon a tree. But as in the latter case, the sap of the parent stock must pass freely into the new bough, and thus assimilate it with itself; so in the other, the new class of people must be adapted to receive the spirit, that is to say, the laws, manners and general feeling of the nation with which they are united. In other words there must be a mutual blending and amalgamation whereby the two may become one people. But this latter consummation is not recognized in the proposition which we are considering.

A foreign mass in the midst of a society with

which it cannot assimilate is as a dead member, through which the life blood of the body social does not circulate ; if inactive it becomes the seat of putrescence and gangrene which will shortly spread throughout the whole system, unless recourse be had to amputation. But in a community where this heterogeneous part is active, being quickened by motives and interests of its own, the disorder becomes ten-fold worse. It has no emblem, unless we imagine the body of a man possessed at once by two discordant spirits.

During the middle ages, the Jews were subjects of persecution in most of the christian nations of Europe. By a decree of Ferdinand of Spain they were expelled from that kingdom at once, to the number of one hundred and fifty thousand. Under the reign of Philip the Long, they were driven from France, being accused of having poisoned the springs with their lepers. At the coronation of Richard I. a general massacre of the Jews broke out in London which extended to York and other cities. The pretexts for these outrages were various. Heresy was a standing charge ; they were also accused of monopolizing trade ; of exacting usury, to say nothing of other accusations. But the Jews lived to themselves, apart from the rest of the community, with whom they did not mingle in marriage ; they were a separate people ; they sympathized not in the general feelings. When

distrust and aversion were thus excited and kept alive, a pretext for giving vent to them would not long be wanting.

There is another view in which it may be seen how impossible it is for two several races of people to live together in peace under one government, each being distinct from the other, yet both participating equally in the administration. The constitution of laws by which a people are governed, is adapted to their particular condition; it is indeed the natural offspring of their wants, their feelings, their habits of thought and pursuits; and bears in every feature the impress of the national genius. As a nation gradually changes so also its constitution is modified to suit; a more refined age discards much that belonged to a former more barbarous period, and adopts new institutions which correspond better with the present. How different, for example, is the English constitution from that which prevailed three centuries ago!

It will follow from this that any particular system of government can suit only that people for whose uses and convenience it was framed. A community of Englishmen would find a French system of laws and manners very ill-adapted to their comfort; and so vice versa. As there are in the language of a people certain idioms and forms of speech which are peculiar and which

cannot be translated into another tongue, although the general principles of language are every where the same ; so while the great maxims of policy and government are universally acknowledged by all civilized nations as the same in all countries alike, there are nevertheless certain characteristic peculiarities which distinguish individual states from all others ; and are so intimately blended with the spirit and genius of the people as to be inseparable therefrom. A more excellent illustration of the same thing is contained in Lord Bacon's simile, 'like as waters do take tinctures and tastes from the soils through which they run, so do civil laws vary according to the regions and governments where they are planted ; though they proceed from the same fountain.' In view of this truth how were it possible that two distinct nations, each possessing its idiomatic peculiarities, could live together under a political system which suits only one of them ? How greatly is the absurdity of such a supposition heightened, when it is known that the one nation is composed of whites, the other of blacks ; that the one is highly civilized, refined, and wealthy ; the other lately delivered from slavery, imbued with a servile spirit, ignorant, coarse, and destitute of substance.

This same truth is illustrated by the revolutions which sometimes take place in a nation. The government being established to suit the general

interest at an early period, becomes ill adapted to the same end, when after the lapse of some ages, a gradual change has passed upon the pursuits, manners and character of the state. Yet the constitution was established with a view to stability ; large interests, a whole aristocracy, for example, or the monarchy itself are opposed to a change ; the system suits their wants and wishes as well as it ever did ; for at the time of its establishment, these were the only prominent interests in the nation, the people being in a state of vassalage. But by the gradual weakening of the aristocratical or monarchical power ; by the introduction of trade ; by the more general distribution of landed property, the people have become powerful. The government having been framed without a view to their good, is unsuited to their wants ; hence comes a struggle between the expansive and the conservative powers of the commonwealth. This may be seen exemplified in the history of England in all the gradual changes which were made in the constitution, from the time of Magna Charta up to the revolution of '68, and even since that period. Just before the civil wars of Cromwell's time, the royal prerogative had been carried to its greatest height by James I. whose favourite maxim was, that kings held by a divine right ; and that all liberty to the people must come to them as a gift from the throne of majesty. By this full

development of the crown's pretensions, the people saw clearly that there was no security for their own rights and liberties; that they had no part in the political fabric; that there was no unison between their interests and the constitution under which they lived. This perception being accompanied by a consciousness of strength, prompted to a speedy determination of a matter which could not be suffered to remain in doubt.

Hence it is apparent that for every great interest in a community, there must be a corresponding provision adapted thereunto in the laws of the land. The constitution must be in harmony with the people; it must be the natural offspring of their wants, their feelings, their habits. Thus the different members of the state are required also to be bound together by a general sympathy, subsisting mutually between each and all; so that the provisions which are made for the security and happiness of one part, may not be opposed to the wants and interests of another. In a homogeneous community, this general harmony will be the test of the excellence of the government; for therein the interests of one part, so far from clashing, will altogether coincide with the interests of all, and will tend to promote the same.

But how different the case when one-half of the community is directly antagonist to the other! When the laws and institutions which correspond

with the intelligence, the refinement, the wealth and industry of the one class, cannot so much as be understood by the inferior division, which is wanting in all that distinguishes the other !

When one class of a community is in subjection to the other, provided, that it be not a subjection brought about by mere brute force, but founded on the natural subordination of the weak and ignorant to the more powerful and civilized, there may then exist a state of perfect harmony. For the enslaved will then have no part in the administration of affairs ; nor will they desire any, being conscious of their own incapability of even understanding, much less of managing such great matters. The benefits of good government will come to them through the medium of their superiors ; and partaking of its blessings in such way, they will look no farther than to their own masters for the source of their enjoyments. When the severity of rule is tempered with kindness, as I have witnessed in instances without number, there springs up between master and slave, a domestic sympathy, which is the kindly foster mother of many good affections. The children of the family are nursed by faithful and affectionate slaves ; their childish sports are with those of like age though of different colour ; yet what does childhood know or care of differences in complexion ? The feelings of deep attachment formed thus early

in life, if they be not afterwards broken by harsh treatment, with what intensity do they cleave to the heart of the negro? I have seen the manly character of the master reflected in the demeanour of the slave; the same sort of self-respect which made a gentleman of the one, served also to mould the other into a faithful domestic. The negroes are proud of their master's worth; they delight to bear his name, and scorn to disgrace it. To me it appears that a condition of servitude in which such feelings are nurtured may be the happiest of all means whereby a degraded people may be raised into a better state. There must be a tedious process undergone, and one full of troubles, before unenlightened man can be made fit to receive with safety, the dreadful yet precious responsibility of his own self-government. A barbarous people, among whom a spirit of self-renovation is yet active, such for example as the English were at the period of the Norman conquest, through what scenes of confusion, and strife, and violence, and bloodshed, must they pass in their painful progress towards this great fulfilment! With what fearful, doubting hesitation are the first steps made! How timidly does the young germ unfold! The spirit of liberty, which is but another name for the spirit of truth, moving amid the troubled chaos, impregnates the general soul, and transfuses itself into the embryo ele-

ments of human thought and feeling. How gradually the hidden conception wakens into life! With what terrible struggles, with what parturient throes is it ushered into being! Yet the vivacious chrysalis has scarcely burst the bands of one womb, ere it finds itself enclosed in another, yet possessed of new vigour to enlarge still farther the barriers of its prison. Let the history of any nation be traced, that has arrived at anything like freedom, and it will be seen how great a matter it is to govern one's-self in liberty. How many have sunk in their efforts, after having attained just enough to give freedom to pride and self-conceit!

The Israelitish nation, when they were delivered from the bondage of the Egyptians, had doubtless amid all the degradation of recent servitude, many elements of moral resuscitation. They could remember that Abraham was their ancestor; that Joseph, of their own family, had been ruler over Egypt. They had doubtless preserved in their usages and traditions the memory of many sublime truths, which their forefathers had received by communications with heavenly intelligence. Yet a pilgrimage of forty years, full of sufferings, was deemed proper to be undergone by them, before they were to be entrusted with their own destiny; to say nothing of the wonderful revelations that were made to them, of truths from

heaven, and of the many evidences that were given them of the divine favour. With all these helps they were driven afterwards, by the consequences of misrule, to solicit a king; nay, a second captivity in Babylon was found useful towards preparing them to govern themselves.

If the relation of master and slave were done away in this country, all those kindly feelings which now soften its asperity, would perish along with it; those domestic ties, those household sympathies which twine the closest of all affections around the human heart; which when torn away by violence, each ruptured tendril, like the shoots that were plucked from the tomb of Polydorus, seems to give forth blood:

*Quæ prima solo ruptis radicibus arbos
Vellitur, huic atro liquuntur sanguine guttæ.*

In place of these, what would grow up but feelings of aversion, of suspicion, of jealousy? By what means is it supposed that the unfortunate class of emancipated captives, (emancipated only in name,) could work out their own reformation in a situation such as they would find themselves occupying? Are men to be made new creatures by act of legislature? Can the moral and intellectual man, the only real man, emerge at once from the thralldom of hereditary and habitual vices, into the freedom of truth and of moral self-government? Or can human wishes change the

established order of heaven's decree, and of man's constitution, whereby his deliverance from the dominion of error and of evil is to be wrought only by means of sufferings which himself must undergo? Can this be altered, and a different mode be devised, less painful and more speedy?

Is it likely indeed in the ordinary course of human actions, that a special scheme of legislation would or ought to be shaped for the particular purpose of elevating these people as a distinct class among us, when it is apparent that every step they make towards the possession of rights will be but the hastening of the period when mortal conflict must come to decide the question of supremacy between them and their former masters? For it must be remembered, that amalgamation of colours is a thing not to be thought of as an actual event; but that if the blacks are to be elevated, they must be elevated as a race, distinct and separate. Let any one, who is sincerely their friend, consider but for a time, the condition in which they would be placed by an act of general emancipation. I leave out of view all thoughts of ultimate danger to both races, and direct attention solely to their unfortunate lot—for such it would be. Who does not see that their freedom would be only nominal? For my own part I doubt not but that many, having accepted of emancipation under the impulse of the desire

of change, after experiencing the evils which they must needs suffer if left to themselves, would come back voluntarily and beg the protection of servitude again. If I know any thing of human actions and their principles, I may take it upon myself to affirm, that no laws or enactments whatsoever could be effectual towards improving the condition of these people in this country, if their present relations were changed. Their condition of servitude may doubtless be improved ; for it will admit of the growth of many excellent feelings. This can be done only through the medium of the master ; the sole medium through which external influences should operate upon the slave. Let him learn the true nature of his responsibility and of the duties which grow out of it ; remembering that he has human beings in charge, who are designed for something better than to be the mere instruments of other men's cupidity ; who have good affections in abundance, which may be drawn out towards himself especially, and towards their fellows in captivity ; whereby the burden of toil may be lightened and bondage well nigh lose its characteristic of servility.

Shall we suffer impatience to carry us into hasty action, that we may make these people free before their time, as though our enactments could alter the established nature of things ? A tree may be stunted by human means, but its growth

cannot be accelerated beyond the order of nature. Much may indeed be done in co-operation with her genial influences ; such as choosing a proper situation, affording culture and nourishment. But when the plant is set in an unfriendly soil, under an unpropitious climate ; when in addition, it is so over-shadowed as to be deprived of warmth and light from the sun, how ineffectual must be all attempts to rear it up in health and vigour ! Can we hope to make an ignorant people enlightened by our knowledge, and wise by our experience ? As well may you expect that a tender plant shall be brought at once to maturity by infusing into it the sap of a full-grown tree. The art of self-government is what every nation must learn for itself. The school wherein it is taught is no other than that of adversity and suffering ; for who will cleave to the good and the true before he has known the fatal tendency of the evil and the false ? The negroes of this country are in their first rudiments ; let it not be expected that they should become authors before they can read. Nor let a mistaken philanthropy bewail their lot, and seek to take them too hastily from their course of tuition. There may be modifications of dispensing the discipline ; but it is folly to expect that wisdom will come without the toil of learning.

There can be no complete analogy drawn between the slavery which exists in this country,

and slavery, as it has existed in any other country that I can now call to mind. Among the Romans, the son of a freedman became a citizen. Here emancipation could go on without the danger of creating a separate class, who otherwise must needs be of the lowest order. The enfranchised were gradually incorporated with the great mass of the community, and became an integral part thereof, partaking in the general interests. But in this country the free blacks must remain a distinct class; their colour is an effectual bar against their admittance into social equality, even if the idea of former servitude were not repulsive. Emancipation would therefore confer upon them little benefit; it would take them from one who might be their friend and would throw them into a society where all must be their enemies; it would deprive them of a protector without putting them into a condition of protecting themselves. I speak of them as a people. If political rights were granted them, if means were taken for extending knowledge among them, the natural tendency of such policy would evidently be to build up and strengthen a power in the state, which would in time become the rival, if not the subverter of the constituted authorities. Emancipation without political rights would be no blessing to them; with political rights it would be ruinous to ourselves.

CHAPTER III.

LET us now turn to history, and see how far examples will confirm what reason seems to approve. We shall here find instances of nations over-run and possessed by other nations. We shall see that whenever the differences between the two sorts of people have been of such a kind as to produce strong antipathies, insomuch that amalgamation could not take place by means of intermarriages, then one of two consequences must follow. *First*: The conquered people are reduced to slavery; or, *Secondly*: They are removed from the country by extirpation or expulsion. It will also appear, that in all cases wherein a union is effected between two nations, who had been strangers to each other, such union has been brought about by means of amalgamation or intermarriages. Or in other words, such intermarriages are a necessary condition of a harmonious blending, which cannot take place in any other way.

I point you first to the history of the Israelites in Egypt. Here had been no bloody wars, or long-standing feuds to embitter feelings and give inveteracy to animosities. The Israelites had come into Egypt at the invitation of the king, at a time when one of their own family was his chief minister ; they were received with kindness, and the finest part of the territory was allotted them to inhabit. But the descendants of Jacob preserved themselves a peculiar people ; they adhered to their own customs ; they mingled not with the surrounding people ; and although they were doubtless peaceable, attending to their own concerns, for there is no hint to the contrary, yet were they a foreign people in the land. They were not assimilated with the elements of the national body ; they had no feelings of sympathy in common with the Egyptians. The result is told in a few words : ‘Now there arose up another king over Egypt which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we : come on, let us deal wisely with them ; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them task-masters, &c.’* The lapse of many centuries,

* Exodus i. 8—11.

I presume, has made little alteration in the laws of human nature; the same course which the Egyptians here followed would be adopted now, except that political slavery might be substituted perhaps in place of personal, or entire extermination in preference to either. For in the nature of things how could it be otherwise?

In the course of events the Israelites were to be delivered from this bondage. When they became free, do we see them settling down in Egypt? Do we find them claiming an equal participation in the civil and political affairs of the nation? Do they demand the country of Goshen to be restored to them, which was indeed their right, for their ancestors held it by virtue of an especial grant from the crown? Nothing of all these; on the contrary, the first day of their liberation from bondage was the first of their pilgrimage to Canaan. How were it possible that they should dwell happily in the land of their servitude, with every thing around them to recall the memory of their degradation? How could they sit down, side by side, with those who had been their oppressors; with whom they could not harmonize in thoughts, feelings, or habits?

If the Egyptians had been willing to admit their former bondsmen into an equality of political privileges, and if the latter had desired it, is it

likely that this participation would have been a bond of union, a friendly harmonizer, a something in common wherein sympathy might arise, that should become a principle of coalescence and peace? Alas, it would have been but a ground of contest, an arena for strife, a means of giving subsistence and form and durability to their feelings of mutual hostility. For how could they exercise these powers in common who had no feelings in common, nor objects, nor hopes? We see even in the best regulated states, how questions of political interest cause dissensions among people of kindred blood, of the same colour, who are bound together by a thousand ties, and constitute one community. How could harmony subsist between parties marked by national distinctions, arrayed compactly the one against the other, like armies upon a field of battle, a mutual repugnance already pre-existing which prevents the least approach towards union; and most of all, when it is apparent that the prevalence of the one party must cause the ruin of the other. For their particular aims are so diverse, that both cannot succeed at once.

In order that they might enjoy their newly acquired freedom in peace, it was therefore necessary that the children of Israel should seek some other country. When they were about to take possession of the land of Canaan, which was

already occupied by a rude and barbarous people, we do not see them entering upon negotiations or making treaties with those tribes. Nor when the invaders had gained some victories by force of arms, and had made good a lodgment in the country, do we find them making use of these advantages to procure for themselves favourable conditions, and thereupon establishing themselves conjointly with the native inhabitants. It often happens, as will be shown hereafter, that a victorious nation after overrunning a country, settle down quietly with the conquered, and both soon come to form one people. But here nothing less than utter extermination could give security and permanence to the new government which was about to set up its institutions in a strange land. May not the reason be seen in this, that the two nations were too far asunder ever to be united? The chief cause of this repugnance was religious faith. The institutions of the Israelitish government were imbued throughout with the spirit of their own theology, which would admit of no compromise with the idolatry of the native pagans. Hence there could be no intermarriages; and of consequence no peaceful communion of political powers.

Will it be said to all these illustrations which are drawn from the history of the Jewish nation, that they were a people under the direct guidance of heaven; that the events of their fortune were

all directed to a particular end by special Divine interference ; that miracles were wrought at almost every step of their progress ; that they were indeed mere involuntary subjects of a superior will, which ordered and conducted their affairs ; and that, from these considerations, their example is not applicable to human transactions in general ; that no principles of universal policy are to be deduced from their history ? For myself, I prefer to consider all true principles as being in harmony with that Supreme nature from whence comes all truth of whatsoever kind, and that His direct interference, so far from invalidating, will but give additional confirmation to those rational deductions which are drawn from the experience of things. I cannot allow myself to believe that violence was done to the freedom of human action, in any particular of the Divine administration over the concerns of that people ; but rather that all his dispensations were accommodated to the nature of man, to the capacity of the subjects, and to the conditions of their situation. There is doubtless a spiritual meaning contained in the history of every event that is recorded by Moses, and it is generally acknowledged that the whole progress of the Israelites, from first to last, is intended as an emblem of spiritual things. Especially is it a type or picture of man's progress in moral reformation. But in the language of Paul : 'the word of God is not

bound.* It is capable of unlimited application in the harmony of truth ; and all principles genuinely derived, that bear upon the nature of man, whether in a political aspect, or in his individual relations, may find confirmation therein. Why then should we not derive from the inspired history of these remarkable people all the instruction which we can find in the same, both for our own personal improvement, and also for political wisdom, with an humble seeking after truth, that we may understand aright ?

I have already alluded to the history of the Moors and Spaniards, wherein the same principle is illustrated, viz : That two distinct races, so far unlike that amalgamation is impossible, cannot dwell harmoniously together in the same community, unless the one be in a state of servitude to the other. Here, also, difference in religious faith was the chief cause of mutual disassociation. It would seem, at first view, that this would be the last cause of variance between people, for religion teaches mutual forbearance and sincere good will. In the Mahometan doctrines, and among enlightened pagans, these principles are found. Yet it will appear that in proportion to the value we set upon any thing is the jealousy with which we watch over it. Hence religion

* 2 Tim. ii. 9.

which involves the highest considerations of human happiness, has in all ages been the occasion of the most obstinate contentions. These strifes have doubtless been aggravated, if not excited, by the apprehensions which were felt, lest the predominance of a foreign sect should endanger the acknowledged doctrines of the national faith. When the benign spirit of true religion shall prevail over the earth, we may with reason believe that such contests will cease; for they derive their chief aliment from the human passions, which being mingled with truths, pervert the same. Yet in the pure state of human society the distinctness of different nations will doubtless be preserved. For each community, following instinctively the natural laws of sympathy, which unite like with like, will fall peaceably, each into its own sphere, and there will be no violent attempts made, either by ambition or by fanaticism, to force unions where the voice of nature has pronounced the decree of mutual divorcement.

But it is manifest that other causes of difference, besides those that spring from dissimilarity of religious doctrines, may occasion reciprocal repugnance between nations of different origin and habits, if an attempt is made to blend them into one. For it is in this particular, as it is in physics. There is in all substances an essential quality which philosophers call *impenetrability*;

whereby the space which is occupied by one body cannot be held at the same time by another. The occupancy of one excludes all others. So, when a nation is homogeneously and compactly formed, insomuch that it becomes an *individual*, the law of its own being, perpetually repels all foreign bodies from invading its integrity. It may indeed assimilate foreign elements to itself, as I have already illustrated by the analogy of grafting a strange shoot upon a mature stock. But all accretions from external sources must become blended into one nature, by the transfusion of the essential spirit. When a blending of this sort cannot take place, by reason of repulsion, then union is impossible.

Let me direct you to another illustration, with which religion has nothing to do. When the Saxons invaded Britain, and finding the country to be better than their own, wished to take possession of it, they saw in the original inhabitants of the island a people not differing greatly from themselves, so far as civilization or religion was concerned. It would seem to us, that it had not been a difficult matter for the two nations to settle down together; the land was thinly peopled; the government undefined, except by traditional usages; each tribe was in a measure independent; society seemed indeed to be nearly in its original elements, before arts, laws, and national interests

had given unity, firmness and individuality, along with that rigidity of parts which belongs to old established nations. In all probability this union would have followed, if the supremacy of the Saxons had been achieved in the usual manner of such conquests. But we are told that they were invited over at first as friends; that they came in such guise, and no doubt with friendly intentions, expecting no other compensation for their services than such plunder as might fall to their share in case of success, or such remuneration as their allies should make them, according to stipulations either formally agreed upon, or mutually understood. The first step however, in the acquisition of Britain by the Saxons was marked by a breach of faith. Having driven off the Picts and Scots, for which purpose they had been summoned, they now became more formidable enemies than the barbarians of the north had ever been. For having helped their allies, they next turned to help themselves, and seized upon the land which they had undertaken to protect. This flagrant injustice roused the indignation of the deceived victims; and gave life and animosity to all the usual feelings of national repugnance. Henceforth there could be no confidence between the parties, and as a consequence, no friendly amalgamation. The conquest, carried on by fire, and sword, and horrible barbarities, was finally consummated by utter extermination; none of the native Britons escaped, except

such as found refuge in the mountainous region of Wales, whither the invaders cared not to pursue. Upon this foundation was erected the Saxon government in Britain ; to such a beginning there could be no other end, that might combine security with possession.

Will it be said that this reciprocal hostility was caused and kept alive by continued acts of aggression ; that a state of open war existed ; and that the Britons only manifested the natural resolution of a people who were determined to maintain their independence ? And from this will it be urged, that the example affords no illustration of the condition which a southern state would be in, if her slaves were made citizens ? You will understand, I am sure, my dear sir, that I refer to this illustration to show the truth of the principle, that when two nations are so dissimilar, or feel the one towards the other such mutual aversion, that a friendly amalgamation cannot take place by means of intermarriages, these two nations cannot dwell harmoniously together in the same community. If this reciprocal hostility exist, it matters not much from what particular causes it sprung ; whether from dissimilarity of national manners and habits, so great as to create aversion on both sides, heightened by difference of language, such as would repel two christian nations, English and Spanish, for example : or from diffe-

rence of religion combined with the other, in which case the repulsion would be stronger, as between English, for example, and Turks ; or from difference of colour, along with differences in degrees of civilization, the one people being refined, the other barbarous ; and this the more, when one race had lately been in servitude to the other ; as would be the case, for example, between our own citizens and the blacks of this country. Or the fixed aversion may be caused by outrageous violations of faith, showing a settled purpose of oppression, and giving evidence of little safety under such domination ; as was the case in the instance of the Saxons and Britons, just referred to. Or it may follow from traditionary enmities and feelings of national rivalry, transmitted from age to age, until they have become woven into the national character ; as was the case between England and Scotland in the reign of Edward I. when that prince attempted the conquest of the Scots, after having duped them, in pretending to interpose as a friend to settle their differences. The country was over-run at least three times ; all opposition was put down and the conquest seemed to be finished. But it could not have been effected except by the destruction of the great body of the Scottish people. In short, this repugnance may arise from any causes that destroy confi-

dence, or that prevent the flow of sympathy upon something like terms of equality.

When Edward III. had gained possession of Calais, and wished to affix that town permanently to his kingdom, he removed all the French inhabitants and peopled it anew with English. Mr. Hume speaks of this measure, as one that evinces the wisdom of that able monarch; and it may serve to show the reason why Calais remained for two hundred years in possession of England, while her other acquisitions in France, consisting of many provinces and of towns almost innumerable, fell one by one from her grasp.

I go on to another illustration which is now before our own eyes. When English colonists arrived on these shores, they found the country occupied by an aboriginal race, peculiar in their customs and but little advanced in the arts of civilized life. In most of the New England settlements, continual wars were carried on between the colonists and the Indians; in Penn's colony of Pennsylvania, the two races dwelt side by side peaceably for many years. In neither case was there any approach towards coalescence, either civil or social; in both, the entire removal of the one people was a necessary condition to the growth of the other. I presume, the distinction is not more strongly marked between the two races of Anglo-Saxon and aboriginal Americans, than between the

first named, and the African negroes. If between either two there be found the fewer obstacles in the way of a peaceful blending, the distinction would seem to be in favour of the native Indians. We could approach them upon terms nearer equality ; there are no degrading associations of servitude connected with them, for they have ever been an independent race. The example which was set by Mr. Rolfe, in Virginia, was not indeed generally followed by the colonists of Jamestown ; but, so far from incurring odium, that gentleman was thought to be rather honoured than otherwise, by an alliance with an Indian princess ; and the descendants of Pocahontas are to this day, reckoned among the most respectable people of Virginia. Nor would it occasion revulsion in the general feelings of the community if a similar marriage should take place now. I need not ask, would disgust and universal abhorrence be withheld at the consummation of an intermarriage between a respectable gentleman on the one part and a negro woman on the other ? What is the inference from all this ? The white men and the red men could not unite peaceably in friendly coalescence. They differed too widely ; they could not assimilate together. But do the whites and blacks differ less ? Nay, does it not appear that the repelling power is greater, which must ever keep *them* apart from a union of common and

equal citizenship? The Indians, it may be said, could not be made citizens, by reason of their wandering habits and fondness for a wild kind of life. Is the restless activity of the Indian a greater disqualification than the torpid indolence of the negro? With a disposition on our part to receive the native tribes into our political society (for how many efforts have been made to reclaim them!) it has been found to be impossible. What likelihood is there that a purpose of a similar kind could be effected between the whites and blacks, when feelings of disgust are excited at the bare mention of it?

It is common with some to consider these antipathies as the effect of prejudice from which the benevolent spirit of christianity ought to deliver us. Let us not be deceived. Let us not expect from christianity, what it was never intended to effect. The truths of that sublime faith conjoined with its pure spirit, when they are received into the understanding and heart, do indeed change the will, and expel the evil affections of our selfish nature. But the constitution of the mind remains much the same. The character of a man, or his internal being, is made up of the elements of social life, knowledge, feelings, prejudices in the midst of which he is reared. These he imbibes, and they are fashioned within him according to his disposition or temperament. They

become blended with his nature; they are his constitution. By these all the manifestations of his active powers will be modified. A Mahometan if converted to christianity, although imbued with its genuine spirit, would yet be a different character in species, from one who was born and reared in a christian community, and penetrated in an equal degree with the christian spirit. Why is it that the Laplander or an inhabitant of Greenland loves his native hills of snow and ice, and prefers his smoky hut before the beauties of warmer climates and the refinements of luxury in civilized countries? Why is it that the Indian of the woods pines amid the splendour of cities, and turns with a longing heart towards the dark forest and hunting grounds? If we judge according to our ideas of the convenient and the beautiful, such men would seem to be almost insane. We could not understand them: we should doubt their sincerity. Yet the love of the beautiful, of the convenient, is in them as well as in us; but it manifests itself according to the nature of those elements with which it is embodied in their own minds. How unjust should we be to call upon them to put away their prejudices, as we might call them! They could not admire in outward objects what we admire; our green fields, our fertile valleys, our limped streams, and shady groves; for there would be no associations in their minds

wherewith to blend them with delight. Their childhood was passed amid different objects ; and many of their most pleasing recollections are mingled with the ideas of snows, and ice, and wild forests, and the like, which we regard with feelings not of pleasure. They might complain of our antipathies, with as much justice as we would have in contemning theirs.

The southern man has been reared in a society of which slavery formed a distinguished feature ; he grows up with all the associations that are natural to such a state. With these his earliest feelings and thoughts are tinctured. If by the exercise of an enlightened understanding he comes, in after life, to perceive, what he has not before thought of, that slavery is an evil, he may be willing, nay anxious to assist in putting it away. To see those unfortunate people free and happy, in a condition where such blessings might be permanent, would be to him a source of purest joy. To this end, he would be willing to make sacrifices ; he would labour zealously and in good faith. But to be willing to receive them into political equality, or into social communion, to join in personal alliances, would, in my judgment, instead of showing a just spirit of benevolence, manifest a total disorganization of the elements of a healthful character. So far from rising in good esteem,

a man of such disposition would be regarded with distrust ; with something very near akin to loathing ; as one who had no stability, no consistency, no self-subsistence, no fixed principles.

CHAPTER IV.

LET us now turn to some examples of history, wherein different nations are shown to have coalesced. It will be found, I think, in every case to which reference may be made, in any history, either ancient or modern, that amalgamation by intermarriages has been an indispensable condition of such harmonious union. Whenever the national aversion on each side was so strong as to prevent intermarriages, no matter by what means this feeling of aversion was thus heightened beyond mere antipathy, which is natural against a close approximation with foreigners—whenever it existed, I say, to such degree as to prevent intermarriages, no union has taken place; the two races have lived in mortal strife, if brought close to each other; and no peace could subsist between them. On the other hand it will be found, that when national prejudices have been carefully softened by the prudent management of some wise ruler, insomuch that intermarriages

went on between the different races; it has happened in gradual process of time, that the several peculiarities of each have been lost in the common interfusion. So universally has this characteristic marked all conjunctions of different communities, that it might save time to ask, not what are the examples in which this mark is to be found, but where is there one that has it not? In all records, annals, traditions; among all nations, tongues, tribes, clans, or communities, of any sort whatsoever; in all climates, whether torrid, temperate, or frigid; in all diversities of local situation, whether upon rivers, or in islands of the sea, in plains, or upon mountains; in all degrees of human refinement, or of human barbarity, from the cannibal hordes of New Zealand to the polished community of Athens in the days of Pericles; under any circumstances, whether of commotion, or tranquillity, of poverty or wealth, or in any other condition, wherein freedom of action was at all to be found, I demand that one instance be shown, wherein two different races of men, in any degree approximating towards numerical equality, have united peaceably together in one community of citizenship, without having become cemented at the same time by means of mutual intermarriages.

The Romans received the Sabines into their city; one hundred new senators, *patres conscripti*,

were chosen from among the strangers to sit in the common councils of the state, along with the original *patres*; the citizens of the two nations enjoyed all political privileges in common. But the Romans had taken Sabine wives before this union was brought about. So complete and harmonious was the amalgamation, that the name of Sabine was, in time, no more heard of; they became one people, having one language, one constitution, one country.

When Alexander had overthrown the empire of Darius, and wished to unite his vast territories into one body, his first step was to take to wife Roxana, of the imperial family of Persia; he adopted the Persian dress, and caused his grandees to do the same; he received into his body guard many of the Persian youth, and studied to do away all distinctions between the nations. Here however, the conquered country was not required to receive strangers into its bosom; the different communities were not brought into near contact: the several provinces were allowed to retain their own laws, and in many cases, their former rulers. If then, it was found to be proper to bind even this loose connection by the bonds of intermarriages, how indispensable must the same provision be, when two nations are to dwell together within the limits of the same territory?

The Romans held most of their conquered pro-

vinces by force of arms. They made no attempt to occupy their extensive territories by settlements of native Romans among the original inhabitants; nor did they seek to subvert the laws and institutions of the nations which they subdued. Such was the overawing influence of the Roman name, that foreign states sought shelter by owning allegiance, and found protection to be an equivalent for the loss of independence. But when this great empire began to fall asunder, and to sink under the inundation which rolled in successive torrents from the north, there is seen a different system of conquest. The barbarians who now swarmed over the south of Europe, were disposed to occupy the countries they subdued; and here we may find fit illustrations of our principle. Do we find it happen in any one instance, that the Gothic conquerors and the subdued people remain, each distinct, retaining their respective languages, manners and customs, yet participating in the same political government? Did they not speedily become one people, each race mutually giving and receiving of their several peculiarities? Are not the languages of European nations at this day perfect specimens of such blending? It is, perhaps, useless to dwell upon so plain a thing, yet specific examples are not wanting. When Alaric, king of one of the invading nations, had gained possession of large territories on the border of Italy, and

formed a treaty with Honorius, emperor of the West, he received in marriage the sister of that monarch. When Clovis over-ran Gaul, his first act was to unite himself in marriage with Clotilda, daughter of the native Burgundian prince; by which means he acquired possession of that province; and what was a still more important consequence, he was converted to the christian faith by the influence of his queen, who had embraced that religion. In pursuance of the same wise policy, Clovis took care to have the bishops of the new church, selected from among the native Gauls, which was a great step towards removing national differences.

William, duke of Normandy, effected the conquest of England. He treated the Saxons as a conquered people, in consequence whereof his government was nothing other than a rule of force. Under his son, William Rufus, the same policy was pursued, and much bitterness existed between the different classes of his Norman and Saxon subjects. When Henry I. usurped the throne, he married Matilda, daughter of Edgar Atheling, of the royal Saxon line, and by means of this politic act, together with no mean abilities of his own, he was enabled to maintain his seat in despite of Robert, his elder brother, who was the rightful heir to the crown. The dissensions between Normans and Saxons in England sub-

sided in proportion as this example was followed throughout the kingdom.

I know not that there is any need of dwelling longer on this topic. There is however one other illustration, which might have been brought forth in the list of those examples of nations that were too far dissociated ever to unite, and who of consequence could not participate together in political matters. It may however be none the worse for coming in here, inasmuch as it is especially applicable, more than any other example in history, to our particular concerns: the parties being similar to those that now occupy the southern portion of this country, viz: whites and blacks. An advocate of the abolition doctrines thus speaks in referring to the disturbances of St. Domingo, 'The apologists of slavery are constantly reminding abolitionists of the 'scenes of St. Domingo.' Were the public familiar with the origin and history of those scenes, none but abolitionists would dare to refer to them.'* I give the 'origin and history' in the words of this writer.

'In 1790 the population of the French part of St. Domingo was estimated at 686,000. Of this number 42,000 were whites, 44,000 free people of colour, and 600,000 slaves. At the commencement of the French revolution the free coloured

* Jay's Inquiry, p. 171-2.

people petitioned the National Assembly to be admitted to political rights, and sent a deputation to Paris to attend to their interests. On the 8th of March, 1790, a law was passed granting to the colonies the right of holding representative assemblies, and of exercising to a certain extent legislative authority. On the 28th of the same month, another law was passed, declaring that all *free persons* in the colonies, who were proprietors and residents of two years standing, and who contributed to the exigencies of the state should exercise the right of voting.

‘The planters insisted that this law did not apply to free *coloured* persons. They proceeded to elect a General Assembly, and in this election the free blacks were, with but few exceptions, prevented from voting. The newly elected assembly issued a manifesto, declaring they would rather die than divide their political rights with ‘a bastard and degenerated race.’ A portion of the free coloured people resolved to maintain the rights given them by the mother country, and assembled in arms under one of their number, named Oge.’

It is not my purpose to speculate concerning the merits of this question, nor attempt an interpretation of the act of the French National Assembly. It is enough to know that not any act of that Assembly, or of any other legislative body, could have brought about a harmonious participa-

tion of political privileges between these parties. I believe it would not be easy to find a more complete illustration, than may be found here, of the proposition which I have been endeavouring to set forth. Here are two distinct races nearly equal in numbers, the whites amounting to 42,000, the free blacks to 44,000; they are disjoined by differences of colour, of blood, of condition; they are animated, the one towards the other, by all those feelings of antipathy which are natural to such dissimilitude. What makes it more adapted to our purpose, one class had been in a state of servitude to the other. Could a more exact picture be drawn of what would in all likelihood be our condition, if the mad attempt should be made of introducing negroes to an equality of political rights in some one of the cotton-growing states?

Who does not see that the French population of St. Domingo were only following the natural instinct of self-preservation in thus resisting all demands of the other race in the way of admittance to citizenship? Could they have harmonized together in the public councils? Would their objects have been the same or in any way parallel? From the vast body of six hundred thousand slaves would there have been no accessions to the free coloured party, which was already superior in number by two thousand? Or would not the first act of legislation have been a decree of univer-

sale emancipation, when by such measure the question of predominance would have been settled at once? And what would have followed this, but the utter extermination of all who were of European origin? What does Mr. Jay mean, when he says 'if the public were familiar with the history and origin of those scenes, none but abolitionists would dare to refer to them?' Does he mean to applaud the efforts of the blacks in thus seizing upon what they deemed their rights? Does he regard the subsequent horrors and butcheries that closed the dreadful catastrophe, in the banishment or murder of a whole race, in the plunder of property, in the wildest rage of licentious and bloody passions, does he regard all these as the fit awards of retributive justice? And are we to believe that he would behold with equal satisfaction a similar scene in this country? Why none but abolitionists dare refer to them? Is it from this picture of horrors that the abolitionists draw their elements of the sublime and beautiful in political morality? Can none but abolitionists dare refer to them, lest they be struck with terror at the apprehension of a like calamity at home? What means he? Or what means he not? I wish he had not used such words.

The negro slaves of the British West Indies have been emancipated, some on condition of serving out an apprenticeship; others, I believe,

without such condition. In neither case have disturbances followed. It is usual to point to this example as a fact which overturns all theories concerning the ultimate fatal effects of emancipation in this country.

There is nothing surprising in this, that a race naturally indolent, having few inducements to exertion, should sit down in repose after being released from extorted toil. They are not a people who can appreciate freedom, except as it affords exemption from labour : they have little of that inward ardour which springs from a consciousness of intellectual or moral power ; which prompts to enterprise ; which delights in activity ; which pants after independence. The casting off of their fetters has not made them freemen ; although it may be a step towards it. But in process of time, when the pleasures of indolence have been enjoyed to satiety, a spirit of activity may come into play. Gradually there will arise a better class among the blacks, who will possess property ; and along with it a sense of self-respect, and a consciousness of new rights. They will claim to have a part in the public affairs ; they will demand an equal participation in the rights of suffrage and of legislation. Then the contest will begin. Who may not see the issue of it ? It requires not any great amount of prophetic vision to discern that at some period, how distant we

know not, the scenes of St. Domingo will be re-acted on the plains of Jamaica. I look by the light of reason and experience. There may be, however, secondary causes at work of which I am ignorant, that shall produce a different result. For example, amalgamation of colours may go on to such a degree that the individuality of the European stock may be diffused throughout a hundred different complexions and shades, in such a manner as to be well nigh lost. In such case the ascendancy of the blacks may be peaceable. But every indication at present points to the final predominance of that colour. Whether it be effected by violence, or by gradual course of amalgamation, must depend upon many circumstances.

Or this result of things in their natural course may be anticipated. It would require not many of our modern philanthropists to bring about a speedier consummation. Let the ignorant negroes be indoctrinated with notions of the rights of man ; let them be taught that all men are equal ; that those who once held them in bondage, and who now reside among them in splendour, are their oppressors, proud aristocrats, who live upon other men's earnings ; above all, let them be instructed to know, that by union and a concentration of their strength, they may enjoy the plunder of the whole land ; that this will be nothing more than the reclaiming of their rightful property, and the

restoring of things to their proper equality ; let these doctrines be infused into depraved minds, to the arousing of dormant passions, giving stability, pretext, aim ; the issue will be a thing not to be spoken of prophetically, but to be gazed upon with horror.

I do not presume that any violent commotions would immediately follow an act of general emancipation in this country ; that is, if foreign influences could be kept away. But the results of things are not less sure by being more distant. When the tendency is apparent, who need be in doubt concerning the end ?

That I may not in any manner misrepresent the meaning of abolitionists, let me here quote again from Mr. Jay. After denying the charge of proposing to bring about an amalgamation by means of intermarriages, he says : ‘But, most true it is, that the Anti-slavery society avows its intentions to labour for the civil and religious equality of the blacks. It has been found *expedient* to accuse it of aiming also at their *social* equality.’ This charge he rejects, and proceeds to illustrate his meaning in this manner : ‘We all know white men whose characters and habits render them repulsive to us, and whom no consideration would induce us to admit into our social circles ; and can it be believed, that abolitionists are willing to extend to negroes, merely on account of their colour, cour-

tesies and indulgences which in innumerable instances, they withhold and properly withhold from their white fellow-citizens? But who pretends that because a man is so disagreeable in his manners and person, that we refuse to associate with him, that *therefore*, he ought to be denied the right of suffrage, the privilege of choosing his trade and profession, the opportunities of acquiring knowledge, and the liberty of pursuing his own happiness?’

I need hardly remind you, my dear sir, of what I am sure you know well enough, that touching the subject of this discourse, I am not considering the blacks as individuals, but as a race. If they were but **a** handful scattered throughout the wide expanse of a white population, a few here and a few there, what reasonable man would wish to debar them from the rights of citizenship? For they could then have no separate purposes of their own apart from the general interest; they could not act as a distinct body; their influence would be as nothing. But how different is the question which we are now considering! A large population equal in number to the whites, and in some states perhaps superior; prolific of increase; of a different blood and complexion; bound by no sympathy, but rather disposed (as they would be most certainly when raised to political equality,) to look with hatred and jealousy upon those who

had once held them in bondage—a population like this to be introduced into an organized community for the purpose of taking part in its government—is this a small matter ?

How absurd is the distinction which this writer attempts to draw between political equality and social equality, granting the one and withholding the other ! What is the end of political power except to secure social advantages ? The first use of political predominance, will it not be to establish predominance in every thing ?

There are indeed in the bosom of every community, ‘men whose characters and habits render them repulsive to us, and whom no consideration would induce us to admit into our social circles.’ Let us suppose that this class becomes the most numerous in a state ; that they are bound together by a common interest, by some sympathetic bond which excludes all minor differences, causing them to move together as one man ; that they are inflamed with bitter animosity against the industrious, the intelligent, the wealthy, whom they stigmatize as aristocrats, monopolists, the oppressive class that grind the faces of the poor, or by any other opprobrious name. Will no dissensions arise in a state of society like this ? Will these men, not admitted to social equality, but possessed of full political privileges, remain quiet and peaceable ? Will they submit to that social superiority

and rest contented with their political rights? What would their political rights be, in their estimation, but a mere name, unless they were used to gain their favourite purposes? And what would those purposes be, but a complete overthrow of existing institutions, the subversion of all order, the violation of all rights?

Let any one look at the manner in which revolutions in governments are brought about, if he would see an illustration of this principle. In France, for example, the lower orders had taken little or no part in the public affairs. The nobility and the monarchy were the prominent powers in the constitution; and seeking their own aggrandizement, they had oppressed the people greatly, insomuch that all community of interests or feelings had been in a measure destroyed. A sense of common injury had united together the great mass of the nation; had concentrated their aims; had caused them to discover in the higher classes a common enemy. When political privileges were extended to the people by Louis XVI. and they were empowered to exercise the right of suffrage in choosing a National Assembly, did they remain contented with this participation in the general affairs of the kingdom? Did they recognize the distinction which this writer has drawn between political and social equality? They did indeed make many new discoveries in politics and

in morals, but this appears to have escaped them in the wildest frenzy of their madness.

There are in this country different sects and religious denominations. They seem to move along harmoniously enough; they exercise political rights in common; and social communion is not interrupted. The reason is very obvious, inasmuch as no one sect has cause of dread from the interference of another. No one party claims to direct; all are parts of a whole; each in its sphere finds no obstacle from a neighbour. But if the whole country were divided into two great sects, whereof one was predominant, and exercised its influence in controlling the affairs of government, as would certainly be the case, how different then would be the state of things? One has need only to look into Burnet's history of his own times, to see such a condition fully set forth, in the accounts of what followed king Charles' attempt to introduce Episcopal church government in Scotland. What dissensions, what violence, what bitter animosity, what persecutions, what bloodshed!

Let us not lose sight of the principle. If the black population, I repeat, were few in numbers, and hence little disposed to aspire after the directing power, no harm would be likely to follow from their admission to political rights. They would then conform themselves to existing laws, and

would desire nothing more. But when they assume the station of an equal power in the community, and of consequence, a rival power—for their aims and interests as a body could in no manner blend consistently with those of the constituted authorities—who does not see that the whole question is changed ?

The foregoing considerations, I am persuaded, are such as would come naturally into the minds of most persons who would give themselves to reflect upon this subject. It would seem, therefore, to be of little use thus to set them forth ; and to insist upon propositions which sensible men would generally admit. But there is no presumption in saying that much delusion prevails concerning these things. I have already alluded to one class of well-meaning persons, who, believing that much injustice has been done towards the coloured people by holding them in slavery, are now in a hurry to recompense them ; this one idea seems to have taken possession of their minds ; they stop not to examine, to consider, to provide. They view one part of the subject, and believe that to be the whole. They do not remember that the blacks who were brought to this country were slaves before—slaves to barbarous savages of their own colour ; that so far from suffering loss, they were indeed gainers by the exchange ; and were perhaps saved from death by their transportation hither.

Others there are, who indulge in a course of reasoning which is exceedingly dangerous, being the basis of all fanaticism, whereby general truths and abstract maxims are made to afford countenance to the wildest and most fatal schemes. General terms are made to comprehend all particulars; and conclusions are drawn from words which are widely at variance from things. Thus, much discourse is had concerning the *rights of man*; as though the term *man* embraced universal humanity in all varieties, whether of barbarism or improvement; in all conditions of society; all forms of government; all habits, manners, religions. The word *man* does indeed denote a large species; the highest in the scale of animal nature; and so far as animal nature is concerned, the term is definite enough. For in degrees of bodily strength, in appetites, in outward form and proportion, men differ not greatly. In all reasonings concerning physical nature, there need be little misapplication of the name.

But how vague does this word become when we speak of men in regard to their moral and intellectual attributes; when we treat of their rights as intelligent beings, and of their several relations, social, civil and religious! The inward nature of man is capable of indefinite expansion; for it is capable of communion with a Divine nature, from whose inexhaustible fullness it may

draw without end. In so far as by the legitimate culture of the nobler affections and faculties it makes improvements, it holds possession of the same by inherent right, to say nothing of the right of occupancy. The elements of human knowledge, and greatness, and power, are of unbounded diffusion throughout the universal sphere of this world's circuit; these when appropriated by the active power of man's intelligence become his own by virtue of such appropriation, for they thus become parts of himself. In proportion as knowledge and power are used for purposes of good, in such proportion do rights increase, and those only have just claims to rights who are competent to use them. There is no good thing which a man has not a right to, if he will make himself fit to enjoy it properly; and on the other hand, there is no good thing which may not prove an evil to him who rashly aspires after it in a spirit of presumption or enthusiastic self-exaltation.

It may be affirmed as an axiom in this country that political freedom is a right. How would the Turks flourish, think you, under the blessings of a free constitution? In all probability after having wearied themselves with slaughtering one another they would be willing to render back the privilege of cutting off heads into the hands of the grand seignor and his viziers, to be exercised at their

good pleasure. How long would a republic be likely to endure among the serfs of the autocrat? What benefit might be dispensed by free institutions throughout the regions of Thibet, among the worshippers of the Grand Lama, or among the Hottentots at the cape of Good Hope? I put these interrogatories, not that I esteem free institutions of little value, but to show how absurd will be our reasonings concerning human things, if we blindly follow out abstract propositions without regard to the various particulars, wherein men and communities differ so greatly.

It is the characteristic of fanaticism to be concentrated upon its end, and to see no other means except such as promise to be the most speedy. Hence wisdom and reflection are banished from its councils. Observe the mode of argument which prevails among abolitionists: 'that slavery being sinful, it ought immediately to cease. Admitting the premises, the conclusion seems irresistible. Sin is opposition to the will of our Creator and Supreme Lawgiver. His wisdom and goodness are alike infinite, and if slavery be inconsistent with his will, it must necessarily be inconsistent with the welfare of his creatures. Reason and revelation moreover assure us that God will punish sin, and therefore to contend that it is necessary or expedient to continue in sin is to impeach every attribute of the Deity, and to brave the vengeance

of Omnipotence.'* On the outer cover of the book from which this is taken, there is a gilt picture of a negro in chains, holding up his hands in view of a liberty-cap on a pole, which is supported by a female figure, intended, I presume, to represent the Goddess of freedom. The argument and the picture seem to be suitable accompaniments, the one for the other, and are alike adapted to make the same sort of impression upon minds that can receive either. *Sin is opposition to the will of our Creator and Supreme Lawgiver—Slavery is sin; therefore to continue slavery is to brave the vengeance of Omnipotence.* Who made Mr. Jay and his coadjutors first judges of the divine will; secondly, of their fellow men; and lastly, the champions of the divine vengeance?

This summary mode of reasoning and acting, this appropriating to one's-self the special favour of heaven for the purpose of judging of sins and vindicating the divine righteousness, has not appeared now for the first time in the world. When the Spaniards took possession of Mexico and Peru they found the country occupied by an idolatrous people. Now idolatry is sin, and sin is opposition to the will of the Creator; and to continue in it is to brave the vengeance of Omnipotence. Or taking the first proposition, for the sake of brevity,

*Jay's Inquiry, p. 141.

as they were not given to tedious deductions in those days, *idolatry being sinful it ought immediately to cease*—they appointed themselves forthwith to be the ministers and executioners of the heavenly will. They tore the idols from their shrines ; they dragged the worshippers to the stake. But such has ever been the nature of fanaticism, claiming to be immaculate itself, it has ever assumed the functions of judge and instrument of the divine justice towards men.

But inasmuch as fanaticism, in these modern times, can no longer employ the arm of force to drive and torture recusants into a desirable conformity, it has fallen upon a course less obnoxious and more flattering to its own self-righteousness. It invokes public opinion, it arrays itself in the garments of holiness, and having taken the name and title of Heaven's champion, it denounces all who join not with it as reprobate, men who fight against God. It would embattle one portion of the community against the other, it would over-awe whom it cannot destroy and make those hypocrites whom it is unable to reform. It presents in its displays a second exhibition of the crusading mania of the middle ages, except that it wants the gallant spirit and open magnanimity of those mistaken champions, who sought to advance the cause of religion by exterminating infidels.

I confess, my dear sir, there is something that

vehemently moves my indignation in these attempts, so common at this day, to fulminate public opinion against particular abuses, in such a manner as that its influence comes in the shape of intimidation and force. What legitimate power has public opinion, or any other kind of opinion, except in so far as it is the embodied form of truth and virtue? The passions of men, inflamed to ungovernable violence, do they lose any thing of their evil nature by being transfused among thousands? Do the specious names of philanthropy and liberty avail any thing towards lessening the mischiefs that follow from their perversion? Is it the first characteristic of a superior light and benevolence to thrust their possessors forward before the public eye, and to hurry them into outrages against the rights and feelings of others? Those indeed who hold true principles in righteousness will readily know, that one constituent principle of such a spirit is to keep one in his own place. Is the truth impotent unless it be conjoined with human passions? *Must the wrath of man be invoked to work out the righteousness of God?* Is there nothing terrible in the words ‘vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay it?’

Who knows not that there are evils in every community? What then? Are we immaculate, that we can assume without impiety the office of

the Supreme, and constitute ourselves the agents of his justice? *Let him who is without sin cast the first stone* It was the characteristic of an ancient man, that he was ready to pardon all faults except his own. We have lived to see the maxim reversed. We grow wise to see the faults of others; we become eloquent to inveigh against them; we are full of zeal to suppress them. We learn noble truths, that we may appropriate them to our own purposes of pride; we are ever ready to invoke the heavenly powers, but it is only to make them allies in our strife.

Is there not a better course established by the all-wise Ruler, and adapted, like all the principles of his moral government, to the constitution of the human mind? We all indulge in evils; every man is addicted to many which he has not himself perceived. It is not in our animal and selfish nature to discover these evils, for they are of a piece with that nature and consonant with it. To the indulgence of our evils there belongs also a delight, which diffuses a self-complacency over the mind, little disposing it to question, much less to remove the cause of so much pleasure. But to every evil there is a sting, which sooner or later the man will feel; reflection will come; truth will shine upon the understanding; it will be seen that *the end of these things is death*. It is then that the better feelings and principles within

us strive for ascendancy over the evil, whatever it may be. As this is the course of an individual's experience in reformation, so is it also the process which a nation undergoes, when the evil is national. That the continuance of slavery is an evil, appears to many of us a thing self-apparent. We wonder that all do not see it as readily; we are apt to impute wilful obstinacy to those who are not as well convinced of it as we are. Shall we therefore adopt the course of those over-zealous persons, who pour forth abuse and vituperation against slaveholders, applying to them all manner of odious names? Shall we charge them with horrible crimes and cruelties, with a view of enabling them to see their errors, and to convince them of our superior righteousness? Nay—but if we wished to rivet them in what we consider their obstinacy, there could not be found a more effectual course. If I believe my neighbour is in error, and reprove him in a spirit that is not of love, tempered with discretion, the light which I convey into his mind will enable him to discover, not his own fault, so much as mine. My arrogance excites his indignation; and the strife that may follow will be but the warring of evil passions, how much soever I may assume the character of a benevolent adviser, and affect to lament the perverseness of the other. Blended in the inmost nature of the soul of man, deep

within his heart of hearts, dwells the inborn feeling of moral freedom, which is ever alive to the slightest impress of external force, and jealous to repel it. So keenly sensitive is this life within him, that he will not move in the course which he believes to be right, if he finds that he is to be driven to it. For high and holy purposes was this spirit given; for when once it is deadened, man sinks degraded from the dignity of his species. It is the concomitant of his moral responsibility which would be an absurdity without it. It indicates with unerring sensibility, that in matters which concern himself and for which he alone is answerable, no foreign influence has a right to intermeddle. In unison with this, upon the basis of his own individuality rests the structure of every man's character. He ought to consider himself as occupying a place in the world which no other man could fill, whether the same be humble or exalted, as a being capable, and therefore intended, to set forth some peculiar manifestation of wisdom and goodness, out of the infinite variety of aspects which those heavenly emanations may present. All elements therefore which he imbibes, whether of thought or of feeling; no matter how derived whether from science, from social life, from observation, or from experience, all will receive, if he be true to himself, a hue and complexion analogous to the peculiar constitution

of his being. How clearly does nature illustrate this great truth throughout all her several species of beasts, of birds, of plants, and of minerals, whereof each being directed by no will save that of Providence, grows up in its own order, each after its kind. The cowslip and the lily spring up side by side in the same meadow; the like elements of moisture, of warmth, of air, and of soil, supply nourishment to both; yet each absorbs and assimilates according to its own nature, and no art of man can make the one assume the complexion of the other. How plainly is the same thing indicated in the endless variety of the human countenance! Our several features are in general similar, yet of the myriads of human creatures that now live, or that have ever lived, where might you find two faces precisely alike? or two voices? What does this denote but that every man has a special individuality, whereby he is constituted one integer; one unit, that amid the community of interests and feelings that bring us together as social beings, there is yet in the moral and intellectual universe of this vast creation, one portion at least whereof he is king—a king subject to law, but possessed of an awful prerogative, being nothing less than of misery and of happiness, of life and of death. With the internal concerns of this kingdom no foreign power has a right to interfere; still less has the legitimate ruler a right to abdi-

cate his sovereignty. Is not this same principle set forth continually in the Divine administration towards man, wherein force has no part; wherein the attribute of Omnipotence interposes not, and truth itself, 'the sword of the spirit,' exerts no power except as it is received voluntarily into the human mind. In the business of our own reformation each must act for himself and not for another; the truth which is to enlighten will come in its own most proper way, adapted to the circumstances and condition of him who is to profit by it; and the same spirit which imparts truth to discover to us our errors, will not be wanting to aid us in our efforts to put them away. It is therefore no small matter to know how far our interference in another's concerns may go hand in hand with duty, and to mark the line where friendly solicitude ends, and where persecution begins. It is impossible for words to define it; the heart that is alive with love to God and man, alone can know it.

What then? Have we not a right to speak our sentiments? Indubitably. But shall we make a vaunt of it in a spirit of bravado? Shall we declare our opinions on delicate matters to all the world, when such utterance does no good, merely to show that we possess the right, and are not afraid to use it? But is it not our duty to proclaim what we believe to be the truth? It is,

indeed, to proclaim it at proper times, to such as are willing to receive it, and who are in a condition to profit by it. But shall we organize societies, raise money, establish newspapers, fill the whole country with excitement, by means of inflammatory harangues and publications in order to convince our neighbours of the truth, when in charity we might suppose them to be as capable as we, to discover it for themselves; to say nothing of their sacred right to manage their own affairs in the way that shall suit them best. Perhaps, if we would examine the nature of this zeal which is consuming us, we should find that other passions were concerned, besides a love of truth, and a sincere desire for others' welfare.

But if this impulse to declare the truth be, indeed, of such holy imperativeness within us, it is surely not inconsistent with its harmony to seek a situation, wherein we may obey it legitimately. Let him then, who is called to be an apostle of freedom in this matter, introduce himself into a community where slavery exists; let him acquire citizenship; then will he be authorized to take part in the public affairs, both by voting and by declaring his sentiments on all public measures. He may recommend whatever he thinks may be for the good of the state; he will be on a footing with the citizens around him, having something at stake. How happens it, that the most zealous

advocates of the immediate emancipation of slaves are to be found in states where there are no slaves to be emancipated?

I take it upon myself to say, that the people of the south have manifested no backwardness in relation to the question of domestic slavery. The time was not long ago, when this subject was discussed with freedom throughout the southern states. It was becoming a matter of anxious solicitude; for it concerned them dearly. The process of effectual reformation was going on in its legitimate way; truth was coming to the minds of the reflecting in the light of their own experience, and was operating upon the unforced will. The evil of slavery was generally acknowledged; for I am persuaded that the sentiments which were declared some time ago, by Gov. McDuffie, of South Carolina, were not held then by the intelligent portion of the southern people. Most of the prominent men in the board of the Colonization Society were gentlemen of influence from southern states. Were they not sincere? Who shall impeach the integrity of those high-minded and honourable men? A full avowal of the sentiment was made by Mr. Clay, at a meeting of the Kentucky Colonization Society, not long ago. Let the life of this great man—a life full of noble and consistent actions—speak for the purity of his motives. It was not longer ago, than 1831 or '32

when the legislature of Virginia, deliberated on the subject in no superficial manner; and there were not wanting many votes to carry out a permanent system for the amelioration, if not the final removal of slavery within that state.

It is true these symptoms have now disappeared. Where shall we look for the cause? I can find it no where, but in the violence and misguided zeal of those persons, who having wandered out of their sphere, have carried confusion wheresoever the influence of their aberrations has extended. They declaim in a vague manner concerning the rights of man; they utter abstract truths, which, general and indefinite, may by a rash application produce the most dangerous results; they assume to themselves the name of philanthropists, under which, any passions may be indulged, which a corrupt heart may choose to cherish. They reiterate the principle, that slavery is wrong; that it should be immediately abolished; that to do right is our duty, whatever may be the sacrifice; that consequences must be left to take care of themselves. Those maxims mislead by the semblance of truth which they carry with them; for there is not one of them which is not proper in its place. But with regard to general truths, it must be observed, that however immutable they may be in their own nature, it is in the power of human passions to give them almost

any hue, by blending therewith the subtle essence of a hidden affection, good or evil. When a spirit of enthusiastic self-exaltation has taken possession of a man's mind, there is no end to the perversion of the holiest truths. The light of the sun is in essence always the same; yet how infinite the hues and aspects it assumes according to the quality of its recipient! It sparkles in the diamond, shines translucent in the pearl, and appears of a dull colour in the common stone. The genial warmth of the same sun quickens life throughout universal nature; imparts vigour to the growing plant; fragrance to the flower, and sweetness to fruits; but in some substances it breeds only corruption, giving birth to worms and creeping things. How admirably may the first emblem illustrate the nature of truth! How well does the latter set forth the quality of love! In the harmonious blending of both, as nature displays it in the beams of the sun, which give forth the mingled blessings of light and heat, how beautifully may we see portrayed the union, which the order of Heaven has established between benevolence and knowledge. *What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

When human things are purged of all evil; when the social institutions are purified from every taint; then may abstract truths find perfect reception and absolute confirmation in the world.

But the progress towards this consummation must be gradual. Truths are to be tempered in their application, not altered in their nature; according to the maxim: *Quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum recipientis*. It was a wise saying of Solon, who upon being asked, if he had given the best laws to the Athenians, replied, 'No; but the best that they were fitted to receive.' Ill health is in physical nature, what evil is in moral nature. A man who is diseased, has in some way departed from the laws of his bodily system; or has received his malady by hereditary transmission; in either of which cases, the analogy with moral evil is perfect. Who does not know that the remedies, which are to restore him to health, must be adapted, modified, tempered, according to all the symptoms, circumstances and conditions of the disease? When the distemper is of a chronic nature, who does not know that the return to health must be gradual in proportion as the growth of the disease has been slow?

Concerning the doing of right at whatever sacrifice I have also to say, that when the sacrifices which are involved by the doing of what one believes to be right, are entirely a man's own, there is no doubt but he acts well, in obeying this great truth to any extent that his conscience may direct. He alone has the control of his own self-government, and with him dwells the responsibility of

his doings. But, unfortunately, men are most disposed to involve sacrifices by following out abstract maxims of right, when those sacrifices fall upon others. It is easy to gain credit for great devotion to principle at the expense of our neighbours; especially when, in reality, we have little real love for their welfare. But I have already alluded to a mode by which the sincerity of these philanthropists may be evinced, who are so anxious to do right at all sacrifices. Let them propose their plans in a slave-holding state, having first become citizens thereof; then will they at least deserve praise for the purity of their motives, whatever may be thought of the wisdom of their policy.

I have said that the indisposition of the southern people towards taking any measures in regard to domestic slavery, is owing to the imprudence and over-zealous interference of abolitionists, in matters which little concerned them. I wish not to misrepresent these persons in any particular. But what has been their course? Let it be told in the words of Dr. Channing. 'They have fallen,' says he, 'into the common error of enthusiasts, that of exaggerating their object, of feeling as if no evil existed but that which they opposed, and as if no guilt could be compared with that of countenancing or upholding it. The tone of their newspapers, as far as I have seen them, has often been

fierce, bitter, abusive. Their imaginations have fed too much on pictures of the cruelty to which the slave is exposed, till not a few have probably conceived of his abode as perpetually resounding with the lash and ringing with shrieks of agony.* Again : 'The abolitionists sent forth their orators, some of them transported with a fiery zeal, to sound the alarm against slavery through the land, to gather together young, old, pupils from schools, females hardly arrived at years of discretion, the ignorant, the excitable, the impetuous, and organize these into associations for the battle against oppression. They preached their doctrines to the coloured people, and collected these into their societies. To this mixed and excitable multitude, appeals were made in the piercing tones of passion ; and slaveholders were held up as monsters of cruelty and crime.†

Hear the result; speaking of this course, he says: 'From the beginning it created alarm in the considerate, and strengthened the sympathies of the free states with the slaveholder. It made converts of a few individuals, but alienated multitudes. It has stirred up bitter passions and a fierce fanaticism, which have shut every ear and every heart against its arguments and persuasions. These effects are the more to be deplored, because the hope of freedom to the slave lies chiefly in the

* Channing on Slavery, p. 153.

† Ib. p. 155.

dispositions of his master. The abolitionist proposed indeed to convert the slaveholders ; and for this purpose he approached them with vituperation, and exhausted on them the vocabulary of abuse ! And he has reaped as he sowed. His vehement pleadings for the slave have been answered by wilder ones from the master ; and what is worse, deliberate defences of slavery have been sent forth in the spirit of the dark ages, and in defiance of the moral convictions and feelings of the christian and civilized world.'

Such has been the course of these men who proclaim themselves the champions of human freedom ; who insist upon principles with a childish intemperance of passion, which shows that they do not understand principles ; who advocate the cause of humanity with a spirit of vindictiveness which belies their professions ; who pretend to uphold the rights of man, yet trample without scruple upon the rights of their fellow-citizens. These are the persons who would interfere in the affairs of wiser men than themselves ; who would direct the course of legislation to sovereign states, having not yet learned the first principles of self-government over their own conduct ; who in the arrogance of self-exaltation, conceiving themselves to be possessed of all wisdom and all purity, are kindly disposed with congenial charity to bring ruin upon men in order to befriend them.

I wish these sayings to be applied, not to the moderate and well-meaning, who have unfortunately adopted the creed of abolitionists, in the belief that no other course was practicable for the removal of a great evil. There are a few zealots who have been the busy agents of strife; these are the men who should be marked as unworthy of trust, and dangerous; men who pervert truths, and who seek to lend the countenance of right to measures which will be found to spring from their own passions. The evil one is never so much to be dreaded as when he makes his appearance in the form of an angel of light. It is the part of all considerate persons *to try the spirits*; keeping in view at the same time, that the more comprehensive the principle, the more dangerous may be a rash application of it.

After an attentive perusal of Dr. Channing's book, I am not certain whether he intends to encourage an amalgamation of the two races, as a means of elevating the blacks to that equality which he thinks them entitled to. He must either mean to recommend this course; or his notions are of a like nature with those of Mr. Jay, who insists upon political equality, but not social. In view of either of these suppositions, I am persuaded, that Dr. Channing, has been lending the sanction of his name and the use of his great abilities to the propagation of doctrines which are

both absurd and dangerous. The first condition is not to be thought of; the second is impossible.

There is allusion made by Dr. Channing to a spurious sort of amalgamation that is now going on between the two races. This is one of the evils of slavery, and not the least to be lamented. It is one of the miserable consequences of that enervation of character, of that looseness of morals, of that licentiousness, which ever creeps in where slavery, long continued in a society, invites to indolence and unnerves the firmness of the manlier virtues. But let no hasty conclusions be drawn from this, to indicate a ready disposition towards amalgamation between whites and an emancipated community of blacks. This kind of intercourse springs not from affection, such as would draw equals together into conjugal union. It is the mere gratification of sensuality, of the lowest kind of lust, and takes place only when the unhappy subject is the instrument and the property of another. It will continue as long as slavery continues, and will increase in proportion to the corruption of manners.

But when once a decree of general emancipation has gone forth, the blacks being now thrown upon self-action, the two races will stand apart. There can be no union of affection; there will cease to be any of lust. Because, it is evident, that this mongrel intercourse is now founded upon

one sort of relations ; unlike ordinary concubinage between parties of the same race, it would cease with the existence of those relations. For although it may continue while one party may entertain contempt for the other, as it is indeed founded thereupon, it cannot remain when hatred becomes an ingredient of the feeling between them. It would be well if the southern people kept this truth in mind : that so long as slavery continues among them in its present aspect, so long are they the promoters of that very amalgamation from the idea of which they revolt with disgust.

When Mr. Burke, impressed with horror at the fearful excesses to which the French revolutionists were hurried by a blind adherence to abstract doctrines, had in the strength of firm principle voluntarily sacrificed the friendship of a great man, he exclaimed with heart-felt indignation : ‘There is something in this cursed French revolution that envenoms every thing!’ One would suppose, that the eloquent expostulations of this far-seeing statesman might have rendered men cautious in giving way to dazzling speculations, engendered by fancy out of the elements of truths commingled with evil passions ; especially, when such expostulations were given, not as mere generalized maxims, vented in the heat of passion, or moulded in the coldness of speculation ; but as

sound truths, which received confirmation almost at the moment of their utterance.

The horrible convulsions of the French nation; have hardly yet subsided into a state of tremulous quiescence; yet as though we were to be made wise by no experience except our own, we are hearing even now the same kind of haranguing, the same enthusiastic proclaiming of general maxims, which are to be enforced in all their nakedness without regard to conditions or particulars; nay, without regard to the inevitable ruin which must follow therefrom. All considerations of prudence are to be silenced by some such brief method as this: *slavery is sin: all sin ought immediately to cease; he that would uphold sin, fights against God, and is braving the vengeance of Omnipotencce.* Does the instinctive impulse of humanity and common sense revolt at the thought of what consequences must issue from this rash application? The answer is ready: *we are required to do our duty: it is not for us to look after consequences.* What awful mockery! What horrible trifling! What abominable prostitution of holy truths, to subserve the foul purposes of self-exalted, self-righteous fanaticism! If any thing less than the highest interests of life and property were involved, how ridiculous would be this solemn assumption of judicial authority over a whole people; lamenting the cruel necessity which

thus enforces them to be severe; making lachrymose faces of pity and tender sympathy, while they are about to assume the heroic magnanimity of Brutus, pronouncing sentence upon his own blood; all going to show the noble sacrifice which they are making at the call of duty! Oh, shade of Polonius, what methodical madness!

What a magnanimous sacrifice is this which is to be made at the expense of others! How pure, how disinterested, how holy are these efforts to emancipate the captive, when the ruin, the havoc and horror that must follow such attempts, made in such a spirit, are to be spread throughout the cities, and towns, and hamlets, and domestic hearths of our countrymen at some distance removed, but in which the philanthropic agents are to suffer no part?

What think you 'twas set up
 The Greek and Roman name in such a lustre,
 But doing right in stern despite to nature,
 Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
 When great, august, and godlike justice called!

The only difference between the Roman greatness, and that which these modern heroes are ambitious to attain, lies in this; that the noble spirits of antiquity harkened to the call of godlike justice, when themselves were to be the sacrifices, 'as he of Carthage, an immortal name,' whereas,

our aspirants are most heroic when others are to be the victims.

I reiterate what was before asserted that the people of the south have shown no extraordinary backwardness in considering the matter of domestic slavery, which being an institution of their own, they alone were chiefly interested in considering. They were beginning to perceive the evil of slavery precisely in the manner in which any evil is perceived, by its consequences upon themselves. For the analogy is perfect in this particular, between a nation and an individual. We are not disposed to see evil in that which ministers to our delight or to our interest, until by its effects we are made to perceive, that it is not in harmony with our happiness ; that its ultimate issue will be ruinous. Upon this discovery the moral principles are not slow in asserting their supremacy ; and in a man, or in a community, if the evil be national, where any redeeming power yet remains in its integrity, reformation will begin, and it will continue to advance precisely in proportion as the mind receives light, and as the circumstances of the case will admit the application of truths. But the great truth cannot be too often remembered, that this is the work of the individual ; whether the individual be a man or a nation. Whatever influence may come from abroad, it should come in such shape of candour or affec-

tionate sympathy, as that the reception of it shall be voluntary. But let no arrogant self-superiority, no assumed solicitude of mawkish compassion, no denunciations of zeal, claiming to be holy, dare intrude upon the sacred province of human free agency, to violate those high prerogatives which omnipotence will not infringe even to shield responsible agents from destruction. For in the awful dignity of moral existence the touch of violence to this spirit of being is little less than death.

But how entirely is all this overbearing anxiety a work of supererogation? Are there not men of good hearts and intelligent minds among the people of the slave-holding states? Who doubts that the south contains within itself all the elements that are necessary to self-redemption from any evils into which the inadvertence of former generations have brought it? Not only has a proper disposition been manifested by the wise and good of the southern people towards considering the subject of domestic slavery; but, unlike the blind agitations which are often the premonitory tokens of a coming reformation, their efforts seem to have been fortunate in an uncommon degree, as it respects the direction which their plans have taken. They have hit upon the principle, which I make bold to affirm, is the only principle, upon which any safe and effectual system can be devised of ultimately delivering this country from

the evil of slavery, with security at once to both races, and with any prospect of final good to the blacks. I do not say that the first organization of the Colonization society was adapted to this end. I believe it was not. It must be the work of each state separately, after the manner of Maryland—a state which has the honour of taking the second step in the gradual progress of this great work.

I am willing, my dear sir, to believe that in the conception of this scheme, there is to be seen the germ of a future growth of blended wisdom and benevolence, which shall be the glory of this country and of the age. Is it objected that no provision is made for the emancipation of slaves? Let not impatience outrun the order of things. Every work must have a beginning, whether the design be great or small, and perfection is not usually the characteristic of beginnings. I had designed to dwell at large upon the plan and prospects of African colonization, but, to tell the truth, I am wearied with writing, as I fear you will be with reading, so long a letter; although I have broken the epistle into chapters for the convenience of resting places. If my intention hold, and your patience be not exhausted, I will treat of those topics in a future letter. I shall then briefly notice colonization; that it is no new or untried system, but that it has been practised continually in all ages of the world, since the days of Noah:

that colonies have generally outstripped the parent country, as may be illustrated by numerous examples in history, both ancient and modern. It would be worth while for some competent man to write a book on this particular view; showing how transplantation operates to change the character, by placing men in situations, wherein the personal responsibility of each is directly felt, and every one is brought to rely upon his own exertions. I shall consider African colonization, particularly; how it differs from all other examples of colonization in many particulars, all of which are to its advantage; how the special direction of providence seems manifest in making the captivity of the negroes in this country the means of introducing knowledge and civilization into Africa, which in the ordinary course of human things, would hardly gain admittance in any other manner.

I am sure it is not a vain imagination that fills my mind, when I view in prospect the future glory of this great undertaking. I found my prognostications upon the nobleness of the principles which are at its basis. There have been colonies planted for purposes of trade, as those of the Dutch in the East Indies, and of the English at the Cape of Good Hope; there have been settlements made in foreign parts by reason of violence and persecution at home; or in avaricious pur-

suits of gold; or to serve as receptacles for the emptying of domestic jails; but never before in the history of human kind has benevolence thus sought to propagate itself by the deliverance of captives; by the raising up of the oppressed; by the nurture and protection of the unfriended. I sincerely hope, that the excellent spirit which has quickened this great system into birth, may brood over its infancy; may continue to direct its unfolding energies; may never depart from it; but may remain henceforth to insure a consummation which shall be worthy of such a beginning.

With much esteem, I remain,

Dear sir, yours, &c.

P. T.





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